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FLOWER,
FRUIT AND THORN PIECES:

OR THE
Married Life, Death, and Wedding

OF
THE ADVOCATE OF THE POOR,
FIRMIAN STANISLAUS SIEBENKAS.

BY
JEAN PAUL FRIEDERICH RICHTER.

Translated from the German
BY EDWARD HENRY NOEL

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. II.

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FLOWER, FRUIT, AND THORN PIECES.

CHAPTER X.

The Solitary New-Year's Day The Learned Scholaster Wooden Leg of Appeal Post in the Room The 11th February, and Birth-Day 1786.

I REALLY cannot congratulate my hero on a new year's morning, on which he turns his swollen eyes heavily in their burning sockets towards the morning red, and then again embraces the pillow with his weary, aching head. In a man, who rarely weeps, such physical pains always accompany moral sufferings. He stayed in bed beyond his usual hour, in order to reflect upon what he had done, and what he should do. He awoke, feeling much colder towards Lenette than when he fell asleep.

If a common emotion has no longer the power of uniting two persons, if the glow of enthusiasm is no bond between two hearts, still less do they mingle together when cool and more brittle. There is an uncertain state of incomplete half-reconciliation, when the perpendicular tongue of the jeweller's balance in its glass case is turned by the slightest puff of another's tongue. Alas! this day the scale sunk a little on Firmian's side, and on Lenette's entirely. Nevertheless he prepared himself, at the same time that he feared, to give and return a new year's wish; but he took

courage and entered the room with his usual hearty step, as if nothing had happened. Rather than call him, she had allowed the coffee-pot to become a refrigerator, and stood with her back turned towards him at the drawer of the commode, occupied in tearing hearts in pieces, to see what was within them. These were printed new year's wishes in verse, which she had brought with her from Augsburg, mementos of a happier time, the gift of friends.

The friendly wish was hidden by a bunch of hearts cut out in paper and twisted together in a spiral line. As the Holy Virgin is covered with waxen hearts, so are other virgins covered with paper assignat-hearts, and with these fair ones all warmth and friendship bears the name "heart,"—as map-makers also fancy that the outline of torrid Africa resembles a heart.

Firmian easily divined all the longing sighs which arose in the bosom of the impoverished Lenette over so many ruined wishes, and all the sad comparisons she drew between the present time and that smiling time, and all that sorrow and the past say to a soft heart. Ah, if on New-year's day even the happy sigh, surely the unhappy may well be permitted to weep!

He breathed his "good morning" gently; and after a gentle answer, he intended to add his good wishes to the torn ones; but Lenette, who was much deeper and more frequently wounded than he had been yesterday, muttered a cold quick answer in return. *Now* he could no longer offer any wishes, neither did she; and thus, unhappy and hard, they pressed together through the gate of a new year.

I must say it—he had already, eight weeks ago,

looked forward with joyful anticipations to this morning—to the sweet melting of their two hearts, to the thousand warm wishes to which he would give utterance, to their close embraces, and the enchanting silence of lips on lips. Oh, how different it all was—so cold, so deadly cold!

Why and wherefore his satirical vein served as a means of relieving his sensitive heart, of which he was at once both proud and ashamed, must be explained elsewhere, when I have more paper at command; for at first sight one would be inclined to presume the contrary. What most contributed to this was the imperial town of Kuhschnappel, upon which, and on several other German places, as upon metals, the dew of sensibility had not fallen, and where the people had provided themselves with bony hearts, on which, as on frozen limbs, or witches branded with the marks of the devil, no wound of any consequence could be inflicted. Among such cold people we are more ready to pardon, and even to seek, exaggerated warmth. A person, on the other hand, who happened to dwell in Leipzig in the year 1785, where most of the hearts and arteries were filled with the spirit of tears, might be tempted to carry his humorous indignation at it too far; as in wet seasons cooks mix more strong spices among watery vegetables than in dry seasons.

Lenette went to-day three times to church; but it was quite natural. When I use the word "three times," I am not horror-struck for the sake of the church-goers, who may be greatly blessed by it, but for the sake of the poor clergymen, who are obliged to preach so often on one day, that they may consider themselves fortunate if, instead of becoming hoarse, they only be-

come damned. A man who preaches for the first time certainly affects no one so much as himself, and is his own proselyte; but when he preaches morality for the millionth time, it is with him as with the Egerian peasants, who drink the Egerian waters every day of their lives, and in consequence cease to be purged by them, however many *sedes* they may produce in the visitors of the establishment.

At dinner the sad couple were silent. The husband only asked her who was to preach, when he saw her preparing to go to the afternoon service, which she had not attended for a long time past.

"Probably the Schuhrath Stiefel," said she, "although generally he only preaches in the morning; but the vesper-preacher, Schalaster, is unable to do duty: he has received a chastisement from heaven, having dislocated his collar-bone."

At any other time Siebenkas would have had a word or two to say to this remark; but now he did nothing but strike the prong of his fork upon his plate and raise it quickly to one ear, while he stopped the other. The bass of this humming euphony drew his afflicted soul into the billows of sound; and this murmuring sounding-board—this trembling clapper—seemed to sing to him on the new year: "Hearest thou not from afar how the mass of thy cold life is ringing to an end? It is questionable whether thou wilt hear at all on another new year—whether thou wilt not then be lying in thy grave, crumbling into dust!"

After dinner he gazed out of the window, not so much into the street as up to the sky. He there beheld two mock suns, and almost in the zenith half a

rainbow, which was intersected by a paler one.* The coloured stars began to sway his heart strangely, and made it as melancholy as though he beheld on high the image or reflection of his half-coloured, pale, and shattered existence; for to a man under the influence of emotion, nature is ever a great mirror full of emotions. To the satiated and quiescent alone, she is a cold, dead window for the outward world.

In the afternoon, when he was sitting alone in the room, the joyful church-hymns and the cheerful song of the canary-bird in the neighbourhood came over his weary soul like the sound and tumult of years of joy buried alive,—and when a bright gleam of sunshine traversed his apartment, and thin shadows of clouds glided over the field of light on the boards, and appealed to his sick, moaning heart by a thousand sad resemblances, “Is not all so? do not thy days pass away as vapours through a cold heaven over a dead earth, and so float on into the night?”—he was obliged to open his heart with the soft blade of music, that the largest drops of sorrow might flow out. He struck a single chord upon the piano again and again, and let its billows gradually subside; and as the clouds flew by, the tones melted away, the euphony flowed along more slowly, quivered, and died; and silence was there—like a grave.

Whilst he was listening, his breathing was arrested, and his heart ceased to beat—a swoon came over his soul; and now, in this dreamy, languid hour, the stream of his heart, like a flood which washes the buried from the churches and the graves, cast up a new corpse out

* The author observed a similar phenomenon in Baireuth on the 19th January, 1817

of the future, and tore away its pall of earth. It was his own body—he was dead! He gazed out of the window upon the cheerful light and stir of life; but a voice within him continued to cry, “Deceive thyself not: ere the new year’s wishes come round again, thou wilt have departed hence!”

When the shivering heart is thus leafless and naked, every air that blows on it is a cold one. How warmly and mildly Lenette must have touched it, in order not to shock it! Thus the somnambulist feels the icy chill of death in the touch of every hand from without the magic circle.

He this day resolved to enter into the so-called corpse-lottery,* that he might at least be enabled to pay the tax on his departure into the next world. He told Lenette so; but she thought his resolution alluded to the mourning gown. Thus, full of gloom and fog, passed the first day; and the first week was still more rainy. The border-shrubs and hedge of Lenette’s love to Stiefel were torn away, and her love now stood free and revealed. Every evening, on which the Schulrath had been wont to come, vexation and grief made still deeper furrows in her young face, which gradually fell away into the open fretwork of sorrow. She inquired the days on which he was to preach, that she might hear him; and every time a funeral passed, she went to the window in order to see him. The bookbinder’s wife was her correspondent, and from her she made new discoveries relative to the Schulrath, and repeated to her the old ones. How much warmth the Schulrath must gain by his focal distance, and how much the husband must necessarily lose by his propinquity, need

* A benefit-club to defray the expenses of burial.—*Tr.*

not be said; even as the earth receives least warmth from the sun when nearest to it, that is to say, in winter.

To all this was added a new ground of disinclination on Lenette's part. The Heimlicher von Blaise had secretly spread abroad the report that her husband was an Atheist, and no Christian. Respectable old maids and clergymen form a beautiful contrast to the revengeful Romans under the emperors, who often accused the most innocent man of being a Christian, in order that they might weave for him a crown of martyrdom. The old maids and clergymen above alluded to, on the contrary, take the part of a man who labours under such a suspicion, and deny that he is a Christian. In this, also, they are distinguished from the modern Romans and Italians, who always say "there are four Christians present," instead of saying "four men."

The virtuous damsel in St. Fericux, near Besançon, was rewarded with a veil worth five francs; and this beautiful prize of virtue, viz. a moral veil worth six francs, men such as Blaise are fond of throwing over good people. They therefore call thinkers, freethinkers, or unbelievers, and heterodox wolves, whose teeth help to smooth and polish; and therefore a wolf is engraved on the best steel blades.

When Siebenkäs first communicated to his wife this report circulated by Blaise—to wit, that he was no Christian, not to say that he was an infidel—she did not pay much attention to it, since it was impossible that she could believe such a thing of a man with whom she was united in marriage. It only afterwards occurred to her that once, when there had been too long

a continuance of dry weather, he had declared himself openly, not only against the Catholic processions,—of which she did not think much herself,—but also against the Protestant prayers, for a change of weather; for he demanded whether the processions of a mile long, called caravans, in the Arabian desert, had ever produced a single cloud by all their prayers for rain; and why the clergy held processions only against wet and dry weather, and not also against a severe winter, whereby, for those at least who joined in the procession, it would be rendered milder; or why not in Holland against fog, or in Greenland against northern lights? But what surprised him most, he added, was, that the converters of the heathen, who so frequently, and with such good effect, pray for the sun when it is only concealed by clouds, do not likewise petition for the solar body itself, which would be much more desirable in polar lands, where it does not appear for whole months at a time, even when the sky is clear; or why, demanded he, lastly, do we not adopt measures against great eclipses, which are seldom subjects of rejoicing, but allow ourselves to be outdone by the savages, who at least succeed in howling and praying them away?

How many words, at first innocent, even sweet, contract poisonous qualities on the shelf of time, like sugar which has been kept for thirty years in the warehouse! * These few words now made a great impression on Lenette, as she sat beneath the pulpit of Stiefel, which was made entirely of apostles, and heard him utter one prayer after the other, now for, now against illness, government, child-birth, harvest, &c. How

* Sander, Concerning the Great and Beautiful in Nature, vol. 1.

dear, on the other hand, Pelzstiefel became to her, and how beautifully his sermons were converted into real love-letters for her heart! Indeed, in general, the clergy stand in close connexion with the female heart, and hence the heart on German cards originally denoted the clergy.

And what did Stanislaus Siebenkäs do and think all this time? Two things which contradict each other. If he happened to say a hard word, he then pitied the weary, forsaken soul, whose rose-parterre of joy was all rooted up, whose first love to the Schulrath languished in want and misery, and whose soul, now a closed flower, would have unfolded its thousand charms in presence of a beloved heart, for *his* was not that beloved heart. "And do I not see," he continued to himself, "that a pin or a pin's head cannot possibly be as good a pointed lightning-conductor for her sultry storm-clouds, as the pointed pen is to me? A man can write much off his mind, but not sew much off; and, setting aside astronomy and psychology, when I consider what swimming-clothes and cork-waistcoats I possess for the deepest floods, in the self-contemplations of the Emperor Antoninus and in Arian Epictetus, neither of whom she is acquainted with either by name or by the binding, and what good firemen these are to me when I get into a conflagration of anger, as I did just now, while she must let her anger burn down without any assistance; verily I ought rather to be ten times milder towards her, instead of being more angry."

But when, on the contrary, it occurred that, instead of having given hard words, he had received them; he then pictured to himself the strong yearning

she felt towards the Schulrath, which she could secretly cherish during her mechanical needle-labours, and increase as much as she pleased; and, on the other hand, he reflected on the continual yielding of his own too soft heart, for which his strong-minded friend Leibgeber would have scolded him without further ceremony, and his wife still more for the contrary defect: "And she would scarcely find such indulgence," thought he, "in her Stiefel, if any conclusion might be drawn from the late rude and hasty manner in which he had called in the capital of love."

He was in this latter humour one Sunday, when perceiving that she was again about to visit the vesper-service, he asked her, with a spirit laden with anger, the light question: "Why she formerly went so seldom to church in the evening, but now so often?"

It was because formerly the vesper-preacher Schallaster performed the service, she answered; but now, since he had put out his collar-bone, the Schulrath preached in his stead. When the bone was restored, then God preserve her from attending his church-service.

By degrees he drew out from her, that she held the young Schallaster for a dangerous teacher of false doctrine, who differed from the Holy Scriptures of Luther, since he believed in *Jesos Christos, Petros, Paulos*, in fact, *as'd* all the apostles, so that it was a scandal to all good Christian souls, and he had named the holy Jerusalem in such a manner that she could not even repeat it—since that time he had put out his collar-bone—but she would not judge.

"Don't do so, dear Lenette," said Siebenkäs; "either the young man is short-sighted, or is not well

versed in the Greek Testament, for the *u* looks there like an *o*."

Oh, how many Schalasters are there, who, in their several sciences and doctrines, say Petros instead of Petrus, and thus needlessly and without corner-stone bring division among men by consanguineous vowels!

But for once Schalaster brought them a little nearer. It was a consolation to the Advocate to discover, that he had hitherto been in error, and that not love to Stiefel alone, but love to pure religion, had taken Lenette to the evening service.

The difference, in sooth, was slight; but in our need we accept every consolation. Siebenkäs therefore rejoiced in secret, that his wife did not love the Schulrath quite so much as he had supposed. Let no one here depreciate the thin cobweb which bears us and our happiness. When we have spun and drawn it out of ourselves, as the spider draws her thread, it sustains us tolerably well, and like the spider we hang suspended in the midst, and the storm-wind rocks us and our web uninjured to and fro.

From this day forward Siebenkäs went again straight-way to the only friend he had in the place, the Schulrath, whose slight fault he had long since forgiven—I believe half-an-hour afterwards—from the bottom of his heart. He knew his coming would be a consolation for the banished apostle in his room-Patmos, and for his wife it was likewise one. He even carried greetings, which were not uttered, to and fro, between the two.

In the evening, the little pieces of news he threw out about the Schulrath were the young green shoots which the scraping partridge scratches out from beneath the deep snow. However, I disguise it not, I feel pity

both for him and for her, and I cannot be the miserable partisan, who is unable to give sympathy and love at the same time to two persons who misunderstand and make war upon one another.

Out of this grey sultry sky, whose electrical machines every hour charged with accumulating fluid, fell at last the first violent thunder-clap. Firmian lost his suit. The Heimlicher had been the rubbing cat's-skin and whipping fox's-tail, which had filled the Chamber of Inheritance, or pitch-cake of justice, full of little pocket-flashes of lightning. But the loss of the suit was adjudged to the Advocate on legal grounds, viz. on the plea that the young notary Giegold, with whose notary's instrument he had armed himself, was not yet matriculated.

There can be few who are ignorant that no legal instrument is valid in Saxony which is not drawn up by a notary who has been matriculated, and no document can be of more value as evidence in a foreign land than in the land where it was originally drawn up. Thus Firmian lost the law-suit, and for the moment the inheritance; but it nevertheless remained untouched as long as any legal dispute was pending. Nothing, indeed, secures a fortune better from thieves, and clients, and advocates, than its being a *depositum* or object of contention (*objectum litis*). Nobody can touch it, because the sum is distinctly specified in the acts, unless the acts themselves were previously got rid of. In the same manner, the husbandman rejoices when the weevil has spun its web all over his rick, and dressed it in white curling-papers, because then the grains which the spinner has not eaten into, are safe against all other weevils.

It is never easier to gain a lawsuit than when it is lost; for then an appeal can be made. After the payment of all ordinary and extraordinary costs, and after the redemption of the acts, the law offers the *beneficium appellacionis* (the benefit of an appeal to a higher court); although in this comedy of benevolence and legal benefit, other extraordinary benefits are first requisite before the legal ones can be made available.

Siebenkäs might appeal. It was easy for him to establish the proof of his name and his ward-ship by another notary of Leipzic, who was matriculated, and nothing was wanting but the weapon or instrument of battle, which was at the same time its object, viz. money.

During the ten days in which the appeal, like a foetus, had to be matured, he was ill and thoughtful. Each of the decimal days exercised one of the ten persecutions of the early Christians upon him, and decimated his cheerful hours. The time was too short, and the way too long, to demand money from his Leibgeber in Baireuth; besides, Leibgeber, to judge from his silence, had probably leapt over many a mountain with the leaping-poie and shoe-spikes of his profile-scissors. Firmian therefore renounced all hope, and went to console himself and relate every thing to his old friend Stiefel. The latter waxed wroth at the boggy, bottomless road of law, and pressed the Advocate to accept stilts for it—the money for making his appeal. Ah, it seemed to the unsatisfied, yearning Schulrath as if he once again grasped Lenette's beloved hand; and his honest blood, frozen by icy cold days, once more began to thaw and to circulate. It was from no cheating of his sense of honour, that Firmian, who preferred hunger to borrow-

ing, nevertheless accepted every dollar from Stiefel, as a little stone with which to pave the marshy path of law, and pass over without getting dirty. But the motive that chiefly influenced him was the thought that he should soon die, and his helpless widow would then at least have the enjoyment of the little inheritance.

He appealed to the highest court, and ordered a new instrument to be executed for him in Leipzig, at another notary's forge by the witness-confessor Lobstein.

These new rubs and scratches of fortune on the one hand, and the goodness and money of the Schulrath on the other, accumulated oxygen in Lenette's mind, but the acid of her ill-humour was condensed, like other acids, by a season of frost, on which subject I will immediately communicate my meteorological observations.

Ever since the quarrel with Stiefel, Lenette remained silent the whole day; and it was only the presence of strangers which cured the paralysis of her tongue. There must be, no doubt, some clever physical explanation of the fact, that a woman is often unable to speak except to strangers; and we ought likewise to be able to discover the opposite cause of the opposite phenomenon,—that a somnambulist can only speak with the magnetiser and his associates. All the people in St. Hilda cough on the landing of a stranger; and coughing, if not itself speaking, may at least be considered as the preliminary creaking of the wheels of the speaking machine. This periodic dumbness, which, as is frequently the case with the permanent disease, probably proceeds from checked eruptions of the skin, has long been known to physicians. Wepfer cites the case of a paralytic woman who

could only utter the paternoster and the creed; and, in married life, attacks of dumbness are frequent, during which the wife can only speak to the husband the few words that are absolutely necessary. A person sick of a fever, in Wittenberg, could not speak during the whole day except from twelve to one o'clock; and we find many such female mutes, who are only able to bring out a word for a quarter of an hour during the day, or in the evening, but relieve themselves by means of the little bell of the dumb, for which they use keys, plates, and doors.

This dumbness at last hardened the poor Advocate so much, that he caught the complaint himself. He mimicked his wife, as a father mimics his children, in order to improve her. His satirical humour often wore the appearance of satirical wickedness; but he assumed it merely for the purpose of keeping himself cool and composed.

When chambermaids disturbed him amid his boiling and brewing of authorship, so that, with Lenette's assistance, they turned his room into a herald's chancery and rostrum, he at least dragged down his wife from the platform (this had been previously agreed upon between them) by knocking three times with the gilded bird's sceptre upon his writing-desk: thus, too, by a sceptre, the freedom of the press is easily taken away from a sister-speaker. Indeed, when he sat before these talking Cicero's heads, without being able to give birth to a thought or a line, and reflected, not so much on the injury to himself, as on that which accrued to countless persons of the greatest intelligence and rank, who thus lost a thousand bright ideas through these learned talkers,—he was often induced to give a terrible rap

with the sceptre or ruler upon the table, even as a pond is struck in order to silence the croaking of the frogs. What most vexed him was the robbery committed on posterity by such evaporating gossip, should his book chance to be handed down to it, deprived, by this means, of much of its merit. It is a fine thing that authors, even those who deny the immortality of the soul, seldom venture to attack the immortality of their own names; and, as Cicero declared he would believe in a future life, even if there were none, so they too still cling to the belief in the second eternal life of their names, even though critics should most conclusively prove it to be a fallacy.

Siebenkäs now made known to his wife that he would speak to her no more, not even about the most necessary things; and this simply that he might not be disturbed, or cooled in his fervour, while he was writing, or become excited against her by long speeches about gossiping, washing, &c. The same thing, indifferent in itself, might be said in ten different tones and discords; in order, therefore, to leave his wife in ignorance, and stimulate her curiosity about the tone in which a thing might be spoken, he would only communicate with her in future, he said, by writing.

I have the best explanation quite at hand. The grave, discreet bookbinder, for instance, was never so vexed with any one throughout the whole year as with his Schliffel, as he called him, his light-headed son, who read the best books better than he bound them, who cut them crooked and too close, and, by screwing the bookbinder's press as tight as a printing-press, both attenuated and doubled the size of the wet sheets. The father could not endure to see it; and became so angry that

he resolved not to speak another word to this devil's own imp. He, therefore, handed over the sumptuary laws and golden rules, which he had to give to his son while he was binding, to his wife, as imperial post-woman, who, with her needle as messenger's staff, got up from the furthest corner of the room, and brought the commands to the son, who was planing close to his father.

The son, who delivered his answers and questions again to the messenger, was quite pleased with this turn of affairs; for his father could not now scold so much: with the latter, at length, it became a habit never to treat any thing by word of mouth. He sought, indeed, to communicate his sentiments to his son by looks, and shot warm glances at him, like a lover, as he sat opposite to him; but, though we have eye-letters as well as palate-letters, teeth-letters, and tongue-letters, yet an eye full of glances is but a confused box of pearl type. Nevertheless, as the invention of writing and of the post has luckily enabled a man who is circumnavigating the North Pole on a block of ice, to communicate with another who is sitting among parrots beneath a palm-tree in the torrid zone,—so father and son, while they were sitting apart opposite one another at the work-table, could now, by means of this invention, sweeten and lighten their separation by a correspondence carried on across the table. The most important letters of business were despatched to and fro unsealed, yet safely, since two fingers constituted the mail-bag and packet in this penny-post.

The correspondence by letter and courier was carried on upon such smooth roads, and with such excellent *postes aux ânes* between the two mute powers, that,

with such freedom of intercourse, the father could easily obtain an answer to the most important communication from his correspondent in one minute; indeed, they were as little divided from one another as if they dwelt in neighbouring houses.

If a traveller should happen to arrive at Kuhn-schnappel before me, I beg he will saw off the two table-corners, one of which was the post-office to the other, and put these *bureaux* in his pocket, and exhibit them, in some great town, to the curious, or to me in Hof.

Siebenkäs, in some sort, imitated him. He cut out, beforehand, little written decrees for the most needful emergencies. If Lenette happened to put an unforeseen question, for which his pocket-book, as yet, contained no answer, he wrote three lines, and handed her the prescription across the table. Those royal notes-of-hand or orders-in-council, which were to be repeated daily, he demanded back again in the evening by a standing written requisition, in order to save writing-paper, and spare himself the trouble of writing them each time anew—he merely handed over the scrap. But what said Lenette to this?

I shall be able to give a better answer after having related what follows. He spoke only once in this deaf and dumb institution. It was while he was eating wild salad out of an earthen dish, which was ornamented, not only with flowers, but with a motto in verse. He lifted off the salad which hid this little border *carmen* with his fork. It ran thus:—

“Peace feeds, and strife
Consumes our life.”

Every time he lifted off a fork-full, he could read one or two feet more of this didactic poem, and he did so aloud. What said Lenette to it, we demanded above. Not a word, I answer. She did not allow his silence and anger to drive away hers; for he seemed to her at last to be doggedly spiteful, and she determined not to be outdone by him. And, indeed, he went further every day, and continually pushed new commandments, in broken tablets, across the table to the corner, or carried them to her table. I will only mention a few: for instance, the carronade slip (for he always invented new titles for his own amusement), containing these words, "Stop the overflowing mouth of that tall sewing-animal, who sees that I am writing, or I will seize her by the throat with which she baits me;" the official paper, "Bring me a little water; I wish to cleanse my bear's paws of ink;" the pastoral letter, "I wish to have a moment or two of peace, in order to read Epictetus on the endurance of all men, therefore disturb me not;" the pinpaper, "I am working at one of the most difficult and bitter satires upon women—take the screaming bookbinder's wife down to the barber's wife, and converse together as briskly as you please;" the torture-bench folio, "I have borne as much as possible this forenoon, and have wrestled and overcome brooms, and feather-dusters, and cap-heads, and tongue-heads—might I not now, towards evening, be allowed to look over these penal acts before me for a little hour, untormented and in peace?"

No one will persuade me that the stinging and pin-paper pricking of these visiting-cards, which he left at her door, was much mitigated by his changing the writing occasionally into speech, when others happened

to be present, and jesting with them in some such manner as the following. One day he said to the hairdresser Meerbitzer, in presence of Lenette, "It is quite incredible how much we yearly consume in our domestic economy. My wife, as she there stands, alone consumes every year ten hundred weight of food; and," added he (as she and the barber struck their hands together over their heads), "I also." It is true, he shewed it to Meerbitzer in print, in Schlözer, that every human being consumes that quantity; but who in the room would have conceived it possible?

Pouting or sulking is catalepsy of the spirit, in which, as in the physical disease, every limb rigidly maintains the position in which it was surprised by the attack; and the spiritual disease has likewise this in common with the physical disease, that women are oftener attacked by it than men.* Siebenkäs, consequently, only doubled the rigidity of his wife by the apparently malicious jest, the sole motive of which was to keep himself cooler; and yet much would have been overlooked had she only seen Pelzstiefel once in each week, and had not the household cares for food which consumed and melted all the pewter from the bird-pole, so to say, decomposed and dried up the last glad warm drops of blood in her unhappy heart. The sorrow-laden one! but, as it was, there was no help for her, nor for him, whom she misunderstood!

Poverty is the only load which is the heavier the more loved ones there are to assist in supporting it. Had Firmian been alone, he would scarcely have cast a glance upon these fissures and holes in our path of life, since at every thirty steps Fate places little heaps

* Tissot on nervous diseases.

of stones wherewith to fill them up. And there was always a haven, or diving-bell, open to him in the greatest storm, besides that of glorious philosophy, his watch, namely, or rather its cost price.

But his wife, with her pieces of funereal music and her Kyrie eleison, and a thousand other things, and Leibgeber's incomprehensible silence, and his growing illness,—all these together, with their many impurities, turned the breeze of his life into a sultry enervating sirocco wind, which excites in a man a dry burning thirst, to cure which he often takes into his bosom what the soldier takes into his mouth to cool and quench his physical thirst—cold lead and gunpowder.

On the eleventh of February, Firmian sought to relieve himself.

On the eleventh of February, Euphrosyne's day, 1767, Lenette was born.

She had often told it to him, and to her sewing-customers still oftener, but he would have forgotten it nevertheless, had it not been for the General Superintendent Ziehen, who published a book in which he reminded him of the eleventh of February. The Superintendent had prophesied that on the eleventh of February, 1786, a piece of southern Germany would be swallowed up, like Lagerkorn, into the lower region by an earthquake; in which case the Kuhschnapplers would have been let down by the coffin-ropes or falling draw-bridge of sinking earth, and have tumbled into hell *en masse*, instead of going, as heretofore, as single *envoyés*. But nothing came of it.

The day preceding the earthquake and Lenette's birthday, Firmian went in the afternoon up to the lifting-machine and springboard of his soul—the old height

where his Henry had forsaken him. His friend and his wife stood in cloudy images about his soul. He reflected that from Henry's departure up to the present time as many important divisions had taken place in his marriage as Moreri counts in the church of the apostles up to the time of Luther, viz. 124. Harmless, quiet, glad labourers were smoothing the path for the spring. He had passed by gardens where they were clearing the trees from moss and autumn-leaves; by beehives and vines which they were transplanting and cleaning, and by the clipped twigs of the willow-trees. The sun shone brightly over the budding landscape. All at once it seemed to him (and this often happens to people of strong imagination, who therefore easily become visionaries) as if his life dwelt in a soft warm tear instead of in a solid heart, and as if his heavily-laden spirit were forcing and dilating itself out of a crack in its prison, and melting into a tone—a blue wave of ether.

"I will forgive her on her birthday," said his softened soul; "hitherto, perhaps, I have been too hard upon her."

He resolved to bring back the Schulrath into the house, and previously the striped calico, and of these and a new sewing-cushion to make her a birthday present. He seized his watch-chain, and pulled out by it the means—the Elias- and Faust-cloak—which could bear him over all evils, that is to say, by selling the cloak.

He went home with nothing but sunshine pervading all the corners of his heart, and, making his watch stop artificially, he told Lenette it must go to the watchmaker's to be mended. In fact, its movement

had hitherto been like those of the upper planets, in the commencement of their clock-day progressive, then stationary, then retrograde. By this means he concealed his project from her. He carried it himself to market and sold it, although he knew for certain that he could not write well unless he heard it ticking on his writing-table,—as, according to Locke, there was a nobleman who could only dance in a room where an old box was standing;—and in the evening the redeemed bloody shirt and seed-bag of weeds was secretly smuggled into the house. Firmian went the same evening to the Schulrath, and with the fresh warmth of his eloquent heart announced to him his resolution,—the birthday, the return of the calico, his request of a visit, his approaching death, and his resignation to every thing.

Warm breath of life was breathed into the sick Schulrath, who had been gnawed paler by absence or love, like the shadows in fresco-paintings by the lime, on hearing that to-morrow the long-denied voice (Lennette could at least hear his in the church) would once more stir all the chords of his being.

I must here introduce a defence and an accusation. The former concerns my hero, who almost seems to crumple up his honour's patent of nobility by this request to Stiefel; but he intended thereby to do a great favour to his wife, and a small one to himself. Not even the strongest and most violent man can hold out in the long-run against the eternal pouting and undermining of a woman. To have peace and quietness such an individual, who, before marriage, swore a thousand oaths that he would have his own way, at last lets the mistress have hers. As to the rest of

Firmian's behaviour, I need not attempt to defend it, because it is indefensible.

The accusation I promised regards my companions in labour. I accuse them of departing in their novels so much from this biography or from nature, and of describing the quarrels and reconciliations of people as possible and as actually occurring in so short a period, that one might stand by with a second-watch and count the time. But a man is not torn away from a beloved being all at once; but the ruptures are succeeded by little bast and flower-bindings, until the long alternations of shunning and seeking end in a total separation; and thus, at last, the poor creatures become most poor. With the union of souls it is in general the same; and even when sometimes an invisible, infinite arm, as it were, presses us suddenly upon a new heart, still we had long known this heart intimately among the holy pictures of our longing, and had often taken down the picture, and often uncovered it and worshipped it.

Later in the evening Firmian found it impossible to wait patiently in his solitary chair of cares, with all his love, until the morrow. The restraint itself made his affection ever warmer; and when anxiety, lest he should die of apoplexy before the spring equinox, overtook him, he was exceedingly terrified, not at the thought of death, but at the idea how embarrassed Lenette would be to obtain the fees necessary to pay for this last trial—the anchor-proof* of man. He was just now possessed of money in superfluity—he jumped up and ran this very night to the director of the Burial

* This consists in casting down the anchor from a height on a hard ground.

Insurance Company, in order that his wife might inherit fifty florins at his death, wherewith to cover the sucker of his body decently with earth. I am not aware how much he paid, but I am used to this embarrassment, which a novel-writer, who can invent any sum he pleases, is quite unacquainted with, but which is exceedingly burdensome and inconvenient to the historian of a true biography, inasmuch as the latter ought to write nothing but what he could confirm by documents and by recourse to archive chambers.

On the morning of the eleventh of February, or on Saturday, Firmian entered the room softened in heart—for every illness and weakness, as loss of blood or sorrow, for instance, softens us; and he was still more so because he anticipated a mild, gentle day. We love much more warmly while cherishing the intention of giving pleasure than an hour afterwards, when we have given it. It was as windy this morning as if the breezes were holding races or a tournament, or as if Æolus were shooting his winds out of air-guns. Many therefore thought that it was the commencement of the earthquake, or that some had already hung themselves from fright. Firmian met in Lenette's face two eyes from which thus early the warm rain of tears had fallen on her first day. She had not in the least guessed his love, or his intentions; she had not thought about them at all; but the following reflection merely passed through her mind: "Alas! now that my parents are dead, no one thinks any more of my birthday."

It seemed to him as if she was pre-occupied by something. She looked once or twice inquiringly into his face, and appeared to be cherishing some intention; he therefore deferred pouring out his full bosom, and

uncovering the double gift. At length she approached him slowly, blushing, and, with embarrassment in her manner, sought to get his hand into hers, and said, with downcast eyes, in which as yet there was no whole tear, "We will be reconciled to-day: if you have given me any pain, I forgive you from my heart. Do the same by me."

This address opened his warm heart, and at first he could only stammer out, as he drew her to his oppressed bosom, "Forgive *thou* only—ah, I love thee more than thou lovest me!" and here heavy hot drops, called forth by a thousand recollections of the previous days, poured from his full deep heart, as deep streams flow more slowly.

She looked at him in surprise, and said, "We are then reconciled, and it is my birthday too to-day; but I have a very sad birthday!"

This reminded him of his present. He ran away and brought the sewing-cushion and the calico gown, and also the news that Stiefel was coming in the evening. She now first began to weep, and said, "Ah, you did that yesterday—then you knew of my birthday? I thank you from my heart for the pretty—pincushion. I did not suppose you would think of my poor birthday."

His manly beautiful soul, which did not put a guard on its enthusiasm, like a woman's, told her every thing, and also of his having yesterday subscribed to the burial-club, that she might inter him with less expense. Her emotion now became as great and visible as his own. "No, no," said she at last; "God will preserve you! But to-day—if we only live over to-day—what does the Schulrath say about the earthquake?"

"Be assured that there will be no earthquake," said Firmian.

He let her go from his glowing heart unwillingly. As long as he remained at home—for it was impossible for him to write—he gazed incessantly into her bright face, from which all the clouds had cleared away. He practised an old trick upon himself, which I have learnt of him; when he wished to love a dear person very dearly, and forgive him every thing—he looked long into his face; for we, that is, I and he, find upon a human face, when it is old, the notched counting-stick of severe sorrows which have so rudely passed over it, and when it is young, it appears to us like a blooming flower-bed on the slope of a volcano, whose next eruption will overwhelm it with destruction. Ah! either the future or the past is written in every face, and makes us, if not melancholy, at least mild and gentle.

Firmian would fain have kept his restored Lenette the whole day upon his heart,—especially before the evening came,—and the glad tears in his eyes; but to her, her occupations were pauses, and her tear-glands were fountains of hunger as well as fountains of the heart; however, she had not the courage to ask him about the metallic source of this gold-bearing brook, on whose soft cradle she was this day rocked; but her husband willingly revealed to her the secret of the sold watch. Marriage was to him to-day what the season before marriage is—a *cembal d'amour* enclosed between two sounding-boards, which, instead of doubling the strings, double their melodious tones. The whole day was a little piece cut out of the clear moon, unveiled by any foggy atmosphere, or rather, out of the second world, into which even the inhabitants of the moon

proceed from that orb. Lenette, by her morning warmth, resembled the so-called moss-grown violet-stone, which yields the fragrance of a little bed of flowers whenever it is warmed by rubbing.

At length, in the evening, the Schulrath made his appearance, nervously embarrassed, looking somewhat proud, but on proceeding to congratulate Lenette, unable to do so for tears, which were as much in his throat as in his eyes. His embarrassment concealed hers. At last the opaque fog between them melted away, and they could gaze upon each other; then they were right joyful. Firmian forced himself to feel contentment, and it entered spontaneously into the bosoms of the other two.

The heavy teeming storm-clouds now hung less densely over three appeased, consoled hearts, the departing threatening comet of the future had lost its sword, and already brighter and whiter sped onward into the blue expanse, passing by more brilliant constellations. In the evening Leibgeber sent a short letter, whose joy-giving lines adorn the evening of our favourite and the next chapter.

And thus in the brain-chambers of the triple alliance, as at this moment in the reader's, the darting, glancing, trembling flower-pieces of the imagination grew into living blossoms of joy,—even as the fever-patient mistakes the waving flowers of his bedcurtain for living forms. Verily the winter-night, like a summer-night, could scarcely be cooled and extinguished on its horizon: and on parting from one another at twelve o'clock, they said, "We were all very happy!"

CHAPTER XI.

Leibgeber's Letter upon Fame. Firmian's Evening Chronicle.

I HAVE cheated the reader in the preceding chapter from pure love. Nevertheless he must still remain in error until he has read the following short letter from Leibgeber:

"Vaduz, Feb 2, 1786

"My Firmian Stanislaus,—I shall be at Baireuth in May, and you must also come thither. I have nothing else of importance to write to you, but this is important enough, that I command you to arrive at Baireuth on the first day of May; for I have the most mad, weighty, and unheard-of project respecting you, as sure as there is a God in heaven. My joy and your own happiness depend on this journey. I would reveal the secret to you in this letter, did it go direct out of my hands into none other but yours. Come! you might travel with a certain Kuhschnappler Rosa, who is coming to fetch his bride out of Baireuth; but if the Kuhschnappler, which God forbid, should be that Meyern of whom you have written to me, and should this gold fish come swimming hither to give his beautiful bride more coldness than warmth with his dry withered arms,—as snakes are placed round the bottles in Spain to cool them,—I will then give her my opinion of him when I come to Baireuth, and insist upon it that he is ten thousand times better than the Heresiarch Bellarmin, who committed adultery much oftener in the course of

his life, that is to say, two thousand two hundred and thirty-six times. You know that this champion of the Catholics had a *crim. con.* with one thousand six hundred and twenty-four women. As cardinal, he wished to shew at the same time the possibility of Catholic celibacy, and the possibility of the papal description of a harlot, which the gloss exalts to the possessor of a regiment of twenty-three thousand men. I am heartily desirous of seeing the Heimlicher von Blaise. Were he nearer to me, I would give him a few hard thumps from time to time, for there is always something sticking in his throat which he can't swallow—an inheritance, for instance, or another person's house and farm. I would give him, I say, a few hard knocks on the hollow of his back, as is the custom, in order to cure him, and await the issue—of the morsel.

"I have been limping about everywhere with my profile scissors since we last met, and am now reposing in Vaduz with a studious library-loving count, who really deserves that I should love him ten times more than I do; but I have already more than enough to satisfy the heart in you, and in general I find the human race and the cheese of green herbs into which it gnaws itself every day more mouldy and rotten. I must tell you, the devil take fame. In a short time I shall disappear, and mingle among the people, and turn up again every week with a new name, that the fools may not know me. Oh, there was once a time, for a few years, when I wished to be something,—if not a great author, at least a ninth elector,—if not laurelled, at least mitred,—if not sometimes a pro-rector, frequently at least a deacon. It would then have afforded me pleasure, had I had the most terrible pains from the

stone, and consequently proportionately large bladder-stones, in order that I might have extracted stones from my bladder to build up the altar or temple of my fame still higher than the pyramid which Ruysch piled up in the cabinet of natural history with the forty-two bladder-stones of an honest woman.* Siebenkäs! at that time I would have wreathed myself a thorny philosopher's beard of wasps, as Wildau did of bees, only to become known by it. 'I grant,' I then said, 'it is not the good fortune of every child of clay, and he ought not therefore to expect it, that a town should kill him like Mr. Romuald (as is related by Bembo in his life), in order to steal his holy body as a relic; but it seems to me that, without being wanting in humility, a man may desire that a few hairs should be plucked, if not out of his fur-coat, as happened to Voltaire in Paris, at least out of his skull, as a *souvenir*, by those who know how to appreciate him; I refer more especially to the reviewers.' Thus I then thought; but I now think more wisely. Fame merits no fame.

"Once, on a cold wet evening, I sat out of doors on a milestone, and looked at myself, and said, Well, in sober earnest, what can be made of you? Is the path open to you to become secretary of war to the Emperor Maximilian and historiographer to the Emperor Charles V., like the late Cornelius Agrippa?** Can you raise yourself to the rank of syndic and advocate of

* Dict. des Merveilles de la Nature, par Ligaud. The manner in which an Egyptian queen built up a pyramid of loose stones, higher indeed, but with less pain than the above-mentioned woman, is well known, and does not belong to Ligaud's Merveilles de la Nature.

** This and what follows about Agrippa, what he became and possessed, is in Naudé (Treatise of the Learned Men who were held for Sorcerers), under the name Agrippa.

the city of Metz? Can you become body-physician to the duchess of Anjou,—a professor of theology in Padua? Do you perceive that the cardinal of Lothringen is as willing to become godfather to your child as he was to the son of Agrippa? And would it not be ridiculous if you were to give out and boast that a margrave in Italy, the King of England, the chancellor Mercurius Gatinaria, and Margarita princess of Austria, all desired to engage you in their service in the same year? Would it not be ridiculous, and a lie into the bargain, not to speak of the difficulty of the thing, inasmuch as all these people exploded into the sleep-powder of death at Niklausruhe, many years before you flared up as priming and detonating powder of life? In what known work, I pray you, does Paulus Jovius call you a *portentosum ingenium*, and what other author reckons you among the *clarissima sui sæculi lumina*? Would it not have been mentioned by Schröckh and Schmidt, in their History of the Reformation, if you had stood in extraordinary credit with four cardinals and five bishops, and with Erasmus, Melancthon, and Capellanus? Even supposing I were really resting under the same great bower and shrub of laurel-crowns as Cornelius Agrippa, the same would happen to me as to him. We should both rot in obscurity underneath the foliage, and no one would come for centuries to lift up the branches and take a peep at us two.

“It would still less avail me were I to manage matters more cleverly, and get myself praised in an appendix to the general German library; for I might stand for years with my laurel-wreath on my hat, in this cool pocket-pantheon, in my niche among the greatest scholars, who reclined or sat around me on their state-

beds—for years, I say, we crowned ones might stand together, all alone in our temple of fame, ere any one opened the door and looked in upon us, or came in and kneeled before me; and our triumphal chariot would only be a wheelbarrow, from time to time, on which the garnished temple, with all its riches, was wheeled to an auction.

“However, I should perhaps raise myself above all this, and make myself immortal, could I but indulge a faint hope that my immortality would come to the ears of others beside those who were still denizens of mortality. But can I feel encouraged when I perceive that it is precisely to the most celebrated personages, over whose faces the laurel-wreath yearly grows thicker in their coffins, as the rosemary over others, I remain an inner, unknown Africa? especially to a Ham and Japheth—to Absalom and his father—to the two Catos—the two Antonini—to Nebuchadnezzar—the seventy interpreters and their wives—to the seven wise men of Greece—even to such simple fools as Taubmann and Eulenspiegel? When a Henri IV., and the four evangelists, and Bayle, who knows all the scholars in the world, and the lovely Ninon, who knows them still better, and the sorrow-laden Job, or, at least, the author of Job,—are ignorant that a Leibgeber ever existed; when I am and remain to a whole former world,—that is, to 6000 years, full of great men and nations,—nothing but a mathematical point, an invisible darkness, a miserable *je ne sais quoi*, I don’t see how posterity, in which, perhaps, there may not be much, or the next 6000 years, can afford me compensation.

“Besides, I cannot know what glorious heavenly

hosts and archangels live upon other universes, and little spheres of the milky way—this paternoster rosary of globes,—seraphs, in comparison with whom I cannot be looked upon in any other light than in that of a sheep. We souls, it is true, rise and advance considerably upon the earth; the soul of the oyster rises to a frog's the latter to that of a stock-fish; the spirit of the stock-fish ascends into a goose, then into a sheep, then is elevated into an ass, or even into an ape,—at last (nothing higher can be conceived) into a bush-Hottentot. But such a long peripatetic climax only inflates a man until he makes the following reflexion: We observe among the animals of a class, among which, as among ourselves, there must be geniuses, good clear heads, and thorough blockheads,—nothing but the last, or, at most, extremes. No class of animals is near enough to our visual membrane to prevent our confounding the middle tints and degrees of their value. And thus it will be with us, when a spirit, sitting in heaven, looks upon us all. On account of his remoteness, he will find it a difficult task (a vain one) to distinguish a real difference between Kant and his shaving-mirrors of Kantites, between Goethe and his imitators; and the above-mentioned spirit will scarcely, or not at all, know how to distinguish masters of faculties from dunces, professors' houses from mad-houses,—for little steps are entirely lost to the vision of one who stands upon a higher step.

"But this deprives a thinker of all pleasure and courage; and may I be hung, Siebenkäs, if, in such a state of affairs, I ever lay myself out to become properly celebrated, or give myself the trouble to pull down, or to build up, the most learned and acute system

or write any thing longer than a letter. Thine, not mine.

“L.

“P.S. I would that God would grant me a second life after this, and that I could occupy myself in the next world with realities; for this is really too hollow and too insipid, a wretched Nuremberg toy,—only the sinking froth of a life,—a leap through the ring of eternity,—a rotten, ashy apple of Sodom, the taste of which I cannot get out of my mouth, spit and splutter as I may. Oh!”—

To such readers as may find this piece of humour scarcely serious enough, I will shew in some other place that it is too much so; and that only an anxious bosom can thus jest,—only a too feverish eye, round which the fireworks of life circulate like the flying sparks which precede amaurosis, can see and draw such pictures.

Firmian understood all, especially at this time . . . but I must return to the 11th Feb., and almost take away from the reader the pleasure he must have felt in sympathy with that of the united trefoil.

Lenette's trembling request that her husband would forgive her, was the hot-bed fruit of Ziehen's earth-quaking prophecy. She believed that the ground, and she herself, were about to sink in and perish; and, at the near approach of death, who already wagged his tiger's tail, she offered her husband the hand of Christian peace. In presence of his disembodied, beautiful soul, hers, it is true, poured out tears of love and rapture; but she herself, perhaps, confounded her joyful with

her loving emotions, pleasure with fidelity; and the hope of again seeing the Schulrath, in the evening, with her longing eyes, expressed itself, unawares even to herself, by a warmer love towards her husband.

It is here very necessary that I should not withhold from any man one of my best maxims, which is, that in his intercourse even with the best woman in the world, he should endeavour always carefully to discriminate between her wishes, both as to what and whom she desires at the time being; and it is not always the person who thus discriminates. In the female heart there is such a flightiness of feelings, such a casting-out of coloured bubbles, which reflect every thing, but especially what is nearest, that while a woman under the influence of emotion is shedding one tear for you out of the left eye, she can go on reflecting, and sprinkle one for your predecessor or successor out of the right. A feeling of tenderness excited by a rival half falls to the share of the husband; and in general a woman, even the most sincerely faithful, weeps more over what she reflects upon than what she hears.

It is vexatious that so many men are stupid on this point; for a woman who regards the feelings of others more than her own is neither the deceiver nor the deceived, but the deception itself, both optical and acoustic.

Such well-digested reflections upon the 11th February Firmians do not make until the 12th. Wendeline loved the Schulrath—that was the fact. In common with all the wise women of Kuhschnappel, she believed in the Superintendent-General and the kick he gave to the earth, until, in the evening, Pelz-

stiefel openly declared that the opinion was impious; then she fell off from the prophetic Superintendent, and sided with the unbelieving worldling, Firmian. We all know that he was as addicted to the masculine humour of exaggerating consistency, as she was to the feminine one of going too far in inconsistency; it was, therefore, foolish in him to hope to regain, by one great effusion of the heart, a friend who had been embittered by so many out-pourings of gall. Not even the greatest benefit, not the highest manly enthusiasm, can at once tear out an ill-will that has insinuated its thousand little root-fibres into every corner of the heart. The love lost by a continued cooling can only be regained by as persevering a warming.

In short, it was manifest, after a few days, that all was in the same position as it was three weeks before. Lenette's love had been so strengthened in its growth by Stiefel's absence, that it no longer found room, with all its leaves, beneath the bell-glass, but grew out into the open air. The *aqua toffana* of jealousy at length circulated through all Firmian's veins, and, flowing into his heart, slowly consumed it. He was but the tree on which Lenette had inscribed her love to another, and which withers in consequence of the incisions. It had been so sweet to him to hope that, on Lenette's birthday, the recalled Schulrath would close, or cover, the greatest wounds, while it was he who, without knowing it, opened them ever more and more. But how much this pained the poor husband!

Thus he became, at the same time, both internally and externally poorer and weaker, and abandoned the hope of seeing the 1st of May and Baireuth. February,

March, and April swept over his head, with heavy dripping clouds, in which there was no blue opening, and no evening red.

On the 1st of April he lost his suit for the second time; and on the 13th, on green Thursday, he concluded for ever his evening paper (so he called his journal, because he wrote it in the evening), in order to forward it, along with as much of his Devil's Papers as was finished, to the faithful hands of his friend Leibgeber in Baireuth, instead of his body, which was soon about to evaporate; for he thought his friend would prefer clasping his soul, which dwelt in the papers, to embracing his withered body, of which Leibgeber, indeed, possessed a second unaltered edition, man upon man as it were, in his own person, and he could consequently have it at any moment he pleased. I do not scruple to insert here unchanged the whole of the concluding passage of the evening paper, this song of the swan, which was afterwards committed to the post:—

“Yesterday my suit suffered shipwreck, in the second appeal, or shallow. The defendant's counsel, and the first chamber of appeal, have brought up against me an old law, which is valid not only in the territory of Baireuth, but also at Kuhschnappel, according to which nothing can be proved by depositions drawn up by a notary—the depositions must be made before a justice of the peace. These two actions render the up-hill road to the third easier. On account of my poor Lenette, I shall appeal to the little senate, and my good Stiefel will advance the money. Truly, the same ceremony must be observed in putting questions to the oracle of justice, as formerly in submitting other ques-

tions to heathen oracles. It is necessary to *fast* and *mortify* oneself.

"I am in hopes to escape from the state-knaves,* or huntsmen with the hanger and blade of the Themis-sword, and through the traps and nets of acts and documents, not so much by means of my purse, which, being stretched out as thin as a whipping-post, I might draw through all the narrow meshes of the net of justice like a leathern pig-tail,—as with my body, which, on approaching the lofty nets, will change into the dust of death, and will then fly free through and beyond all meshes.

"I will this day withdraw the last hand from this evening paper, ere it becomes a complete martyrologium. If life could be given away, I would give mine to any mortal who desired it: I would not, however, have any one suppose that, because a total eclipse of the sun is above my own head, I therefore affirm that there is an eclipse in America too; or that, because snow-flakes are falling before my own nose, I believe that the Gold Coast is snowed up likewise. Life is beautiful and warm—even mine was so once. If I should melt away before the snow-flakes, I beg my heirs, and every Christian, not to publish any part of my 'Selection from the Devil's Papers,' except that which I have copied out fairly, which extends as far as the 'Satire upon Women' (inclusive). Neither must he publish any satirical idea he may chance to find in this journal,—that I most earnestly deprecate.

"If an inquirer into the history of this day or night-book should wish to know what heavy weights, nests, and linen to dry, were suspended to my branches and

* Servants were formerly called *knaves*,—now seldom the reverse.

summit, that they could so bend it down; and if he is only made the more curious because I have written humorous satires,—although my only object was to support myself by my satirical prickles, as by absorbing vessels, like the thistle,—I here inform such inquirer that his curiosity seeks more than I know, and more than I am willing to say; for man and the horse-radish are hottest when rubbed and grated, and the satirist is sadder than the wit for the same reason that the ourang-outang is of a graver disposition than the ape, because his nature is more noble. If, indeed, this paper falls into your hands, my Henry, my beloved, and you desire to hear something of the hail which has fallen, ever thicker and thicker, upon my sownfields, count not the melted hail-stones, but the crushed stalks. I have nothing left that gives me joy but thy love, and nothing that stands erect near that. Since, for more reasons than one,* I shall scarcely be able to visit you in Baireuth, we will take leave on this page like spirits, and give one another hands of air. I hate sentimentality; but fate has at last almost grafted it upon me; and of the satirical Glauber salt, which is taken for it at other times with advantage,—even as sheep which become diseased with the rot, in damp meadows, are cured by licking salt,—I swallow whole spoonful almost as large as that I gained from the bird-shooting, but without any perceptible benefit. However, it is a matter of small moment. Fate, unlike our penal sheriffs' benches, does not defer our execution until we are cured. My vertigo, and other apoplectic symptoms, warn me that the Galenian** blood-letting will soon be

* Want of money and health.

** A bleeding until fainting takes place is so termed.

prescribed to me as a cure for the nose-bleeding of this life. Not that I exactly desire it; on the contrary, I am vexed with a person who immediately demands that destiny shall unswaddle him—for we are swaddled up in bodies, and our nerves and veins are the swathes—as a mother unswaddles her child because it screams and has the belly-ache. I should like to remain some time longer a swaddled child among children of the rope,* and the more so since I have reason to fear that I shall be able to make little or no use of my satirical humour in the next world—but I must go. After this has taken place, I would beg you, Henry, to come some day to this town, and look upon the uncovered face of your friend, who will scarcely again be able to make the Hippocratic mien.** Then, my Henry, when you gaze long upon the spotted grey new-moon face, and reflect that little sunshine fell on it, either of love, or of fortune, or of fame,—then you will not be able to look up to heaven, and say to God, ‘And at last, after all his sorrows, good God, Thou hast annihilated him! And on his stretching out his arms to thee and thy universe in death, Thou hast crushed him here as he lies, poor fellow!’ No, Henry; when I die, you must believe in an immortality.

“Now when I have finished writing this evening paper I will extinguish the light, because the full moon spreads out broad imperial sheets full of light in the room. Then, because no one is up in the house but myself, I will seat myself in the twilight stillness, and while I am gazing at the white magic in the black

* This name was applied to those who were condemned by the secret tribunal

** The countenance distorted in death is termed the Hippocratic.

magic of the night, and listening to yonder sounds of whole flights of birds of passage, which come forth in the clear blue moonlit night from warmer lands, into whose sister-land I am about to depart,—then, once more undisturbed, I will stretch out my feelers, as it were, from this snail-shell before the last frost closes it up. Henry, I will to-day clearly picture to myself all that is past,—the May of our friendship,—every evening when we were too much affected, and were obliged to embrace,—my old grey hopes, which I can scarcely recognise,—five old but bright, warm springs, which are yet cherished in my memory,—my departed mother, who, when she was dying, put a lemon into my hands, which she thought would be put into her coffin, saying, ‘I should rather stick the lemon into my flower-wreath;’ and of that future minute of my death I will think when thy image for the last time on earth will appear before the broken eyes of my soul, and when I shall part from thee, and with a dark inward sorrow which can no longer send a tear into the cold glazed eyes, disappearing and darkened, fall down before thy shadowy form and still only call to thee with a hollow voice out of the thick mist of death.

“Henry, good night! good night! Ah, farewell! I cannot say more.”

END OF THE EVENING PAPER.

CHAPTER XII.

Flight out of Egypt. The Glory of Travelling. The Unknown Baireuth. Baptism in the Storm. Natalie and Hermitage. The most important Conversation in this Book. The Evening of Friendship.

ONE day in the Easter week, when Firmian returned from half an hour's excursion of pleasure, full of forced marches, Lenette asked him why he had not come home sooner. The postman had been with a thick book, but had said that Mr. Siebenkäs must sign the receipt of the packet himself. In a small and humble household, such an occurrence ranks with the great events of the world, and the principal revolutions of history; the minutes of expectation now lay like cupping-glasses and blisters on the soul. At length the yellow-liveried postman put an end to the bitter-sweet throbbing of their arteries. Firmian acknowledged the receipt of fifty dollars; while Lenette interrogated the messenger, asking who had sent it, and from what town it came. The letter was as follows:—

“My Siebenkäs, I have received thy evening leaves and Devil's Papers in safety, the rest by word of mouth!

“*Postscript.* But, hear! if you have the least regard for the waltz of my life, my pleasure, my cares, and my aims; if it is not a matter of the most perfect indifference to you that I frank you, by defraying all your expenses for food and travel, as far as Baireuth, because of a plan whose distaffs the spinning-machines of Futurity must either spin into the snares and gallows’

ropes of my life, or into rope-ladders and anchor-cables; if such, and other things yet more important, still possess the last charm for you, then Firmian, for heaven's sake, pull on a pair of boots, and come!"

"By thy holy friendship, I will pull on a pair," said Siebenkäs; "and even though the lightning-flash of apoplexy should fall from the blue sky of Suabia, and strike me dead beneath a cherry-tree full of blossoms, nothing now shall keep me back."

He kept his word; for, six days afterwards, at eleven o'clock at night, we behold him ready to start, --with clean linen on his body and in his pocket, a hat-case on his head, which was again secretly loaded and saturated with an old fine hat, with new boots on his feet (the antediluvian pair, relieved from their post, remaining in the mean time in garrison), a watch that he had borrowed from Pelzstiefel in his pocket, freshly washed, shaved, and combed,—standing near his wife and his friend, who this day direct all their kind looks and devote all their polite attention to the departing traveller alone, and not at all to one another.

He took leave of both of them in the night, intending to pass it in the great arm-chair, and to depart at three o'clock, whilst Lenette was still sleeping. He appointed the Schulrath to the office of treasurer of the Widow's Fund to the forsaken mock-widow, and confided to him the directorship of the theatre, or at least the parts performed by a stranger, in his little Covent Garden full of Gay's beggars' operas; the journal of which I am now editing for the use of half the world.

"Lenette," said he, "when you require advice, apply to Mr. Schulrath; he will do me the favour to

call on you frequently." Pelzstiefel asseverated in the most solemn manner that he would come daily. Lenette did not accompany Pelzstiefel down stairs as usual, but remained in the room, drew her hand out of the well-filled purse, the starved coats of whose stomach had hitherto rubbed against one another, and snapped it. It is scarcely important enough to mention, that Siebenkäs begged her to put out the candle, and lay herself down to rest; and that he gave her sweet face the long parting kiss, and said good night, and the touching farewell, almost beneath the earth-portal of dreams, with those feelings of redoubled love which swell the bosom when we part and meet.

The last call of the watchman at length drove him out of his chair into the starlit breezy morning. But first he crept once more into the chamber, and went up to the warm, dreaming, rosy girl, shut a window, from which a chilling draught blew secretly on her unprotected bosom, and restrained himself from giving the waking kiss; and he gazed at her, as well as the starlight and pale aurora would permit, until the thought, "I am looking at her perhaps for the last time," made him turn away his eyes, that were becoming too dim to see.

As he passed through the sitting-room, her distaff of flax, with the broad strips of coloured paper she had twined round it for want of ribbon, and her silent spinning-wheel, at which she was wont to work in the morning and evening hours when it was not light enough to sew, seemed as if they were looking at him; and when he pictured her to himself, sitting quite alone in his absence, so industriously engaged at her wheel and distaff, every wish in his heart cried out:

"Oh may all be well with her, poor thing, now and ever, even if I should see her no more!"

This thought of the *last time* gathered still more strength out of doors, from the slight vertigo produced by his late excited feelings, and the interruption of his night's rest; and from the sentiment of melancholy which came over him on looking back upon his receding home and the darkened city, upon the changing of the foreground into a background, and the disappearance of all the walks and heights on which, during the past winter, he had so often walked his freezing heart into warmth. The leaf on which he had been crawling about and feeding, like a caterpillar or grub, fell down behind him a leaf-skeleton. But the first foreign spot, which was as yet unmarked by any stations of his suffering,* already drew, like the serpent-stone, a few sharp poison-drops of sorrow out of his heart.

The flame of the sun now shot up ever nearer to the kindled morning clouds; at length, in the heavens, in the brooks and ponds, and in the blooming cups of dew, a hundred suns arose together, while a thousand colours floated over the earth, and one pure, dazzling white broke from the sky.

As gardeners prune their flowers in the spring, so Fate plucked most of the old yellow withered leaves from Firmian's soul. The act of moving rather diminished than increased his giddiness. A second un-earthly sun arose in his soul, simultaneously with that in the heavens. In every valley, in every little grove, upon every height, he cast off some of the confining rings of the narrow chrysalis-case of his wintry life and

* Alluding to the stations or chapels on a holy mountain of pilgrimage, each designating a different passion or suffering of Christ — *Tr.*

of his grief, and expanded his moist upper and lower wings, and let himself float on the May-breezes with four outspread pinions in the blue sky, beneath lower day-butterflies, and above loftier flowers.

But how powerfully his excited life began to ferment and bubble up within him, when, ascending out of the diamond-pit of a valley full of shadows and drops, he made a few steps beneath the heaven-gate of spring! It seemed as if an almighty earthquake had forced up from the ocean, yet dripping, a new-created blooming plain, stretching out beyond the bounds of vision, with all its young instincts and powers; the fire of earth glowed beneath the roots of the immense hanging garden, and the fire of heaven poured down its flames, and burnt the colours into the mountain-summits and the flowers; between the porcelain towers of white mountains the coloured blooming heights stood as thrones of the Fruit-Goddesses: over the far-spread camp of pleasure, blossom-cups and sultry drops were pitched here and there, like peopled tents; the ground was inlaid with swarming nurseries of grasses and little hearts; and one heart detached itself after the other with wings, or fins, or feelers, from the hot breeding-cell of nature, and hummed, and sucked, and smacked its little lips, and sung; and for every little proboscis some blossom-cup of joy was already open. The darling child of the infinite mother, man, alone stood, with bright, joyful eyes, upon the market-place of the living city of the sun, full of brilliancy and noise, and gazed delighted around him into all its countless streets; but his eternal mother rested veiled in immensity; and only by the warmth which went to his heart did he feel that he was lying upon hers.

Firmian rested in a peasant's cottage after this two hours' intoxication of his heart. The foaming spirit of this cup of joy mounted more readily into the heart of a sick man like himself, than into the heads of other sick persons. When he again went forth, the brilliancy sobered into brightness, his enthusiasm into cheerfulness; every red floating lady-bird, and every red church-roof, and every flowing stream, which glistened and threw off sparks and stars, cast joyful lights and deep colours upon his soul. When he heard the shouts of the charcoal-burners, the resounding of the whips, and the crashing of falling trees in the loud-breathing and snorting woods, and then again came forth and saw the white chateaux and roads, which, like constellations of milky-ways, crossed the dark ground of green, and the beaming cloud-flakes in the deep blue, and flashing sparks, now dropping from trees, now shooting upwards from the brooks, now gliding over distant saws, --then no foggy angle of his soul, no dark corner, was without its sunshine and spring: the moss of gnawing, consuming care, which grows only in the damp shade, fell off from his bread and liberty-trees under the free sky; and his soul could not but chime in with the thousand choral voices which hovered and buzzed around him, and unite in their song—"Beautiful is life—beautiful is youth---and most beautiful of all is spring!"

The past winter lay behind him like the dark, frozen-up south pole. The imperial market-town lay beneath him like a dreary, deep school-dungeon, with damp, dripping walls. Above his room alone hung a few cheerful gleams of sunshine; and he pictured to himself his Lenette in it, as despotic mistress, who to-

day could cook, wash, and talk as she pleased, and would besides all the day long have her head and hands full of the pleasure that was to come in the evening. He did not grudge her in her narrow egg-shell, sulphur-hut, and chartreuse, the brightness which the entering angel Pelzstiefel would bring with him into her Peter's prison. "Ah, in God's name," thought he, "let her be as joyful to-day as I am, and still more so, if possible."

The more villages he passed, with their strolling players, the more theatrical life appeared to him.* His burdens became actors' parts and Aristotelian problems, his clothes opera-dresses, his new boots buskins, his purse a theatrical cash-box, and one of the sweetest recognitions on the stage was preparing for him in the bosom of his beloved friend.

At half-past three o'clock in the afternoon, in a Suabian village, of which he did not even ask the name, every thing in his soul melted into water—into tears—so that he himself wondered at his own emotion. From the neighbourhood, one would rather have presumed a contrary effect. He stood near an old and crooked hawthorn, with a withered top; the peasant-women were watering some linen, glittering in the sunlight on the common, and throwing chopped eggs and nettles as food to the yellow, downy goslings; a nobleman's gardener was clipping the hedges; and the sheep, which were already shorn, were called together around the hawthorn by the Alpine horn of the shepherd. All was so young, so sweet, so Italian-looking: the beauti-

* Every journey changes the village nationality and *little-townism* in us into something cosmopolitan, and into God-citizenship (citizen of the town of God)

ful May had already half or quite undressed every thing—the sheep, the geese, the women, the horn-blower, the hedge-clipper and his hedges.

Surrounded by so smiling a scene, why did his heart become too softened? Not so much because he had been too joyful this whole day, as because the shepherd-minstrel with his fife had called his flock beneath the May-tree. A hundred times in his childhood Firmian had driven his father's sheep under the crook of the horn-blowing shepherd; and this Alpine *ranz des vaches* at once woke up his rosy childhood; and it arose out of the morning dew, and out of its bower of blossom-buds and sleeping flowers, and came up to him heaven-like, and smiled on him innocently with its thousand hopes, and said: "Look at me, how beautiful I am! we have played together; once I gave thee so much—great kingdoms, and meadows, and gold, and a beautiful long paradise behind the mountain; but now thou hast nothing left, and thou art besides so pale. Come and play with me again!" Oh! who is there among us in whom childhood is not a thousand times awakened by music? And she speaks to him, and asks him: "Have not the rose-buds yet opened that I gave thee?"—Ah! yes, indeed, they have opened; but they were white roses!

The evening closed the honey-cells of his joy-flowers with their leaves, and the evening dew of melancholy fell upon his heart, colder and more abundantly the longer he walked. Just before sunset he came to a village; but whether it was Honbart, or Honstein, or Jaxheim, is, alas! as if scratched out of my memory: this much, however, I may say for certain, that it was one of the three, because it was situated

on the river Jagst, in the territory of Anspach, on the borders of Ellwangen. His night-quarters smoked before him in the valley. Before he entered, he laid himself down on a hill, under a tree, whose leaves and branches were a choir of singing-beings; not far from it, the tinsel of a trembling piece of water glittered in the evening sun; and the gilded foliage and the white blossoms fluttered above him, like the grass round flowers. The cuckoo, which is his own sounding-board and his own multifarious echo, spoke to him from the dark tree-tops with his sad complaining voice. The sun melted away, the shadows threw a deeper mourning-crape over the brightness of day; and he asked himself, "What is my Lenette doing now? and who will be with her?"

And here the thought, "I have no loved one to go hand in hand with me!" fell like ice upon his heart; and when he pictured to himself the beautiful, tender female soul, which he had often invoked, but never seen,—to which he would willingly have sacrificed so much—not only his heart, not only his life, but all his wishes, all his whims,—he walked down the hill, indeed, with swimming eyes, which he vainly attempted to dry. But at least every good female soul that reads this story, and has loved in vain, and become impoverished in love, will pardon him these burning drops; for they have experienced how the inner man journeys, as it were, through a wilderness traversed by a poisonous Samiel-wind, in which, struck by the blast, lie scattered lifeless forms, whose arms detach themselves from the crumbling breast when touched by the living being who would press them to his own warm bosom. But you, in whose hands so many a

heart has become cold, from fickleness or the frost of death,—you should not complain, like the lonely, who never lost any thing because they never *won* any thing, and who yearn after an eternal love, of which not even a temporal delusive image was ever sent to console them.

Firmian brought to his night-quarters a calm, tender soul, which healed itself in dreams. When he lifted up his gaze from his slumbers, the constellations, which were framed by his window, twinkled lovingly upon his glad, bright eyes, and beamed down upon him the astrological prophecy of a cheerful day. He fluttered up out of the furrow of his bed with the first lark, and with as many shakes of song, and as much vigour. To-day, when fatigue plucked the bird-of-paradise wings out of his imagination, he could not quite quit the territory of Anspach.

The following day he reached the county of Bamberg, leaving Nuremberg, and its *pays coutumiers* and *pays du droit écrit*, to the right. His road led from one paradise to another. The plain seemed to be composed of gardens inlaid with mosaic; the mountains seemed to kneel down upon the earth, that man might the more easily mount upon their backs and humps; the leafy woods were spread around like garlands on a festal day of nature; and the sinking sun often gleamed behind the trellis of an arbour, upon the slope of a hill, like a purple apple in a network fruit-dish.

In this dell, one would have enjoyed taking a *siesta*; in that, a breakfast; in yonder brook, to see the moon reflected when she stood in the zenith—at her rising, behind those trees; beneath that height of

Streitberg to watch the sun when it enters a green trellis-bed of trees.

As he arrived at Streitberg, where all the above-mentioned pleasures might be enjoyed at once, the following day at noon, supposing him to be as good a pedestrian as his historian he could easily have seen, towards evening, the towers of Baireuth don the red robe of the evening aurora; but he would not. He said to himself; "I should indeed be a fool to break into the first hour of the most delightful of meetings so dog-tired and dried up, and thus deprive myself and him (Leibgeber) of all sleep, and, in the end, of half the pleasure (for what could we talk about to-day?). No; rather let it be to-morrow morning early, at six o'clock, that we may have a whole day before us for our millennium."

He therefore passed the night in *Fantaisie*—an artificial vale of pleasure, and roses, and flowers, about two miles from Baireuth. It is with regret I find myself obliged to lay aside the paper model of this miniature valley, until a more convenient place presents itself to fix it up in. But so it must be; and if I should find no other, there is always a wide space open to me at the end of the book, before the book-binder's page.

Firmian walked on, side by side with bats and cock-chafers, the advanced guard and outposts of a fine day, and behind the inhabitants of Baireuth, who had just concluded their Sunday, and ascension into heaven. It was the 7th of May, and indeed so late, that the moon in her first quarter could cast the profile of all the blossoms and branches upon the green ground. At this late hour, then, Firmian ascended

an eminence from which he could look down with tears and joy upon Baireuth, now softly covered with the bridal night of spring, and embroidered with Luna's spangles—Baireuth, where the beloved brother of his soul dwelt and thought of him. . . . In his name, I can affirm it with a "verily" that he had almost been tempted to follow my example; for, with such a warm, bubbling heart—in such a night, adorned at once with gold, and silver, and azure—I myself, before doing any thing else, would have made a leap into the "Sun" hotel, and upon the heart of my never-to-be-forgotten friend Leibgeber. . . . But he turned back into the odour-breathing Capua; and moreover, in this short interval before his evening meal and evening prayers, and just as he was passing near a dry basin, inhabited by stone water-gods, he met with nothing less than an agreeable adventure, which I will relate.

Against the walled bay stood a female figure, entirely clad in black, with a white veil, holding a faded nosegay in her hand, the flowers of which she was turning over with her fingers. She stood averted from him towards the west, and seemed to be looking partly at the confused stone Swissery, and coral-reef of water-horses, tritons, &c., and partly at the mock ruins of a neighbouring temple. As he passed her slowly, he perceived by a side-glance that she threw a flower, not so much at him as over him, as if this sign of exclamation were meant to rouse a person from his reverie. He looked slightly round, merely to shew that he was awake, and went up to the glass door of the artificially ruined temple, in order that he might linger near the enigma. Within the building a pier glass opposite reflected the whole middle and

foreground behind him, together with the fair unknown, reversed into the green perspective of a long background. Firmian observed in the mirror that she threw the whole nosegay at him, and, upon this falling short of the mark, at last rolled an orange, which she had kept back, up to his feet. He turned and smiled, when a soft but hurried voice said: "Do you not know me?" He answered, "No." And before he had added, more slowly, "I am a stranger," the unknown had approached nearer, and, having hastily drawn the Moses-veil from her face, asked in an elevated tone, "And not yet?" And a female head, which might have been sawn off the neck of the Vatican Apollo, and softened only by eight or ten feminine traits and a narrower forehead, shone before him, like a marble head before the blaze of a torch.

Upon his adding that he was a stranger, and after she had gazed at him still closer, unveiled, and had again let fall the gauze portcullis (all which movements occupied a shorter space of time than one beat of the pendulum of an astronomical clock), she turned away, saying, in a tone which expressed less of embarrassment than of a woman's wounded feeling, "Pardon me!"

He was about to follow her almost mechanically. In lieu of stone goddesses, he now adorned the whole "Fantaisie" with nothing but plaster-of-Paris casts of the departed head, which had only three pleonasms in its face; too much red on the cheeks, too much curve of the nose, and too much running fire and fuel in the eyes. Such a head, thought he, if properly dressed, might exhibit itself in a front box, near the sparkling head of a royal bride, and that too without any dis-

advantage, and it might contain as much philosophy as it could rob others of.

It is pleasant to take such a charming adventure with us into our dreams, because it resembles a dream itself. May now stuck little flower-sticks close to Firmian's drooping trembling flowers, as she had done to those around him, and tied them on loosely. Oh, how brightly do even little joys beam upon a soul which stands on a ground darkened by the clouds of sorrow,—as stars come forth from the empty sky when we look up to them from a deep well or from cellars!

On the following glorious morning the earth arose with the sun. His ever-faithful friend filled his head and heart more than the unknown of yesterday, although, for curiosity's sake, he selected the way by the sea and by the shell out of which the Venus had arisen; but to no purpose; and he waded through the moist radiance and foggy vapour of the glistening silver mine, and tore away from the blossoms on which they hung suspended the strings of gossamer, and spiders' webs strung with seed-pearls and pearls of dew, and pushing aside the branches, which were the keys of an harmonica set in carved foliage and blossoms, he swept away, in his haste to climb to his yesterday's Olympus, chilled butterflies, and blossoms, and drops. He mounted the platform of pleasure, and the burning theatre-curtain of fog hung over Baireuth. The sun stood as king of the stage upon the mountain, and looked down upon the burning of the variegated veil, whose fluttering, sparkling, under-pieces were blown and scattered by the morning breezes over the flowers and gardens. Amid this

radiance he entered the seat of pleasure, the town where his beloved friend resided, and all its buildings seemed to him like bright enchanted castles of air, fallen from the ether, and solidified. It was strange, but on seeing some curtains drawn in, with which the draught of the street was toying, as they hung out of the window, he could not help imagining that it was done by the unknown, though at this early hour, for it was only eight o'clock, a lady of Baireuth could as little have concluded her flower-sleep as the red hen-bit, or the Alpine pippau.* Every new street excited his beating heart; a slight deviation from the right road was agreeable to him, as serving to delay or increase his delight. At last he came to the Sun Hotel, near his own sun,—to the metal sun which attracted this wandering star as well as the astronomical one. He asked below the number of Mr. Leibgeber's apartment, and was told that he lodged at the back of the house, No. 8, but that he had to-day set out on a journey into Suabia, unless perchance he were still up-stairs. Luckily some one turned into the hotel from the street, who confirmed the latter possibility by wagging his tail before the Advocate. It was Leibgeber's Saufinder. To rush up stairs, to burst open the door of joy, and fall on the beloved heart, was the work of a moment. And now the barren minutes of life passed unheard and unseen over the silent close bond of two mortals. They clung together on the waters of life, like two shipwrecked brothers, who, embracing and embraced, swim together in the cold waves, and who have nothing left save the heart on which they die. As yet they had not spoken a word.

* The former opens after eight, the latter at eleven o'clock.

Firmian, who had been weakened by a long period of sorrow, wept undisguised in the presence of his recovered friend. Henry's features were distorted as by pain. Both had their hats on, prepared for travel. Leibgeber, in his embarrassment, knew of nothing better to hold by than the bell-rope. The waiter came.

"Nothing," said he, "but that I am not going away.—God grant, Siebenkäs," he afterwards added, "that we get entangled in a conversation,—pull me into one, brother."

He could very well commence with the pragmatical narration, "*Nouvelle du jour*," or better, "*de l'ennui*," in short with the town or rather country news of what he had yesterday experienced near the veil of the beautiful *je ne sais quoi*.

"I know her," answered Leibgeber, "as well as my own pulse; but I would rather not tell you any thing now, or I should have to sit still and wait. We will defer every thing until we sit in the warm bosom of Abraham, in Hermitage, which, after Fantaisie, is the second heaven in the neighbourhood of Baireuth, —for Fantaisie is the first, and the whole country the third."

They now made an ascension into heaven, in every subject of conversation, and in every street through which they passed.

"You shall sooner knock off my head, like a poppy's, from its stalk," said Leibgeber, on Firmian's betraying, alas! as uncontrolled a longing to learn his secret as I perceive in the reader,—“than induce me to transfer my mysteries either to-day, to-morrow, or the day after to-morrow, from my head into yours;

thus much only I may tell you, that your Selection from the Devil's Papers (your Evening Chronicle contains more diseased matter) is quite divine, and very heavenly, and pretty good, and not without its beauties, but perhaps passable." Leibgeber then told him how much joy it had given him, and how it had astonished him to find that he, advocate in a little town, enlivened only by the souls of shop-keepers and jurists, together with a little appendix of high and mighty government, should have been able to rise in his satires to such freedom and purity of art; and, indeed, I myself have sometimes said, in reading the "Selection from the Devil's Papers," that I could not have composed such things even in Hof and Voigtland, where I have written many humorous things. Leibgeber put the finishing touch to the laurel-wreath, by assuring him that he could laugh more easily aloud, and with both lips, at the world, *en masse*, than silently with the pen, according to the most approved rules of art. Siebenkäs could scarcely contain himself for joy at this praise; but let no one take this ill in the Advocate, or in any other writer, who, in solitude and without panegyrist, has stedfastly pursued the honestly chosen path of art without the support of the smallest encouragement, if, on attaining the goal, the fragrance of a few laurel-leaves, from a friend's hand, penetrate him like spice, and strengthen and reward him. If even the far-famed and arrogant require warmth from the opinion of others, how much more the humble and unknown! Happy Firmian! to what a distance, deep in the south-south-west, did the sweeping storms of thy days now depart; and, as the sunbeams fell upon them, nothing could be seen in them but a gentle,

dropping rain. At the *table d'hôte*, it gave him pleasure to observe in his Leibgeber how much incessant intercourse with men and cities loosens the tongue and opens the head, though in such cases a heart-barrier frequently takes the place of a mouth-barrier. Leibgeber made nothing of talking about himself, even in a humorous manner, before the most distinguished counsellors of state and chancery officials who dined at the Sun; a subject which the imprisoned Advocate would scarcely have ventured upon even after a large bottle. I will here build in the discourse, because it made some impression on the Advocate of the Poor, and place over it the inscription:

LEIBGEBER'S TABLE-TALK.

"Among all the Christian gentlemen, and names, who sit here at table and stick in their forks, no one I fancy was fashioned into one with so much trouble as myself. My mother, a native of Gascony, was going to Holland by sea without my father, who remained in London, as diocesan of the German congregation. But never since the existence of a German court-councillor, did the German Ocean storm and rage so fearfully, as at the period when it was my mother's luck to cross over. Toss hell, with its hissing brimstone lake, molten copper, and plashing devils, into the cold sea, and observe the spluttering, roaring, and seething of the hell-flames and ocean-billows, until one of the two hostile elements has swallowed up or overpowered the other, and you will then have a faint, but, during dinner, a sufficiently vivid idea of the confounded storm in which I came upon the sea,

and into the world. You may imagine, when top-sail sheets, mainsail sheets, the stays of the topmast, the braces of the main-yard, not to speak of runners and other tackle, all of them things so used to the sea, were nearly destroyed, that it was nothing short of a sea-miracle that so tender a being as I then was could commence his life in such a storm. I had not then as much flesh upon my body as I have now fat, and might weigh altogether about four Nuremberg pounds, which, if the schools of anatomy are to be depended upon, is now the weight of my brain alone. I was besides quite a young novice, who had as yet seen nothing of the world but this devilish storm,—not so much a man of few years as of no years at all (although everybody is nine months older than he is recorded to be in the parish-register), delicate,—having, in opposition to all medical rules, been kept too warm and swaddled for the first nine months of my life, instead of being prepared, as I ought to have been, for the cold air of the world: thus, quarter grown, a tender flowerbud, and liquidly soft as first love, I did not create any greater expectations in such a storm (it was with great difficulty that I added my squeak once or twice to the roar of the tempest) than that I should be extinguished and cease to exist, even before it cleared up. The people did not like to let me go out of the world without an honest name and altogether without Christianity; for, as it is, one generally takes less out of the world than one brings into it; but nothing could be more difficult than for any one to *stand* godfather upon a tossing ship, which threw every thing down that was not bound fast. The ship's chaplain luckily lay in a hammock, and baptised from

thence downwards. My godfather was the upper boat-swain, who held me for five minutes; but as he could not stand alone steadily enough for the baptist to touch the head of the baptisee with the water, he himself was held by the under-barber, who, in his turn, was fastened to a marine, the latter to the boat-swain's mate, the mate to the coxswain, and the coxswain sat upon the lap of an old sailor, who hugged him grimly.

"Nevertheless, as I afterwards learned, neither the ship nor the child perished. But you all perceive that, however difficult the struggle may be for any one, amid the storms of life, to become and remain a Christian, or to gain a name, either in a directory, literary gazette, in a herald's office, or upon a medal, yet few have ever found it so hard as I did to get even the first elements of a name—the basis and binomic root of a baptismal name, upon which hereafter the second great name might be grafted, and to get what little Christianity a creature yet to be confirmed, and a catechumen who still sucks and is silly, is able to receive. There is only one thing in the world which is more difficult to make, which the greatest hero or prince can only make once in his life, but which no genius, not even the three spiritual electors, or the German emperor himself, with allied powers, could accomplish, even if they were to sit for years in the mint, and stamp with the newest coining-machines."

The whole *table d'hôte* entreated him to name what it was that was so difficult to model. "It is a crown-prince," answered he, coldly; "it is not easy, indeed, for a reigning sovereign to produce princes with an appanage; but, with all his efforts, even in his best

years, he cannot produce more than one sample of a crown-prince (for such a seminarist is no plaything, but rather the principal work—the mill and language-wheel of a whole people). But gentlemen, counts, barons, chamberlains, staff-officers, and, more especially, quite common people and subjects—in short, scurvy creatures of this sort, such a *generatio æquivoca*,—are begotten by a prince so easily, that he creates such *lusus naturæ* and preliminary swarms or *protoplasmata*, in considerable numbers, even in his earliest years, for his amusement, while in a more mature age he cannot succeed in producing a successor to the throne. After so many trial-shots, and so much exercise of arms, one would have come to the contrary conclusion.”

END OF LEIBGEBER'S TABLE-TALK.

In the afternoon they both entered the green pleasure-grounds of the Hermitage, and the avenue that led to it seemed to their joyful hearts a path cut through a fragrant shrubbery. The young bird of passage, Spring, had settled upon the plain around them, and her unladen treasures of flowers lay scattered over the meadows, and floated down the streams, and the birds were drawn upwards by long sunbeams, and the winged world hung intoxicated in the sweet odours that were poured around. Leibgeber resolved to open his secret and his heart this very day in Hermitage; but previously a bottle or two of wine.

The first thing he did was to beg the Advocate to give him a short narration of his adventures up to the present moment, by sea and by land. Firmian did so, but with discretion; he passed hastily over the bad

year of his stomach, over his *hard* times, over the figurative winter of his life, upon whose snow he was obliged to brood like an ice-bird, and over all the cold north wind, which forces a man, like a soldier in winter, to bury himself in the earth: he touched lightly, I say, upon all these things, and therein he acted well; in the first place, because no one deserves the name of a *man* who makes a greater fuss about the wounds of poverty than a girl makes about those of her ears, since equally, in both cases, hooks whereby to suspend jewels are inserted into the wounds; secondly, because he wished to spare his friend whatever sympathetic repentance he might chance to feel on account of the exchange of names, which was the original source of all his springs of hunger; but in the eyes of his intimate friend, his pallid, withered face, and his sunken eye, formed the frontispiece of his month of ice, and was a winter-landscape of this snow-covered portion of his path of life.

But when he came to the deepest hidden wounds of his soul, he could scarcely restrain the drops of blood-water that rushed into his eyes—I mean, when he came to speak of Lenette's hatred and love. While he painted an indulgent picture of her small love to him, and her great love to Stiefel, he used much stronger colours for the historical piece he painted of her good behaviour towards the Venner, and of Rosa's corruption in general.

"When you have finished," said Leibgeber, "I will tell you that women are not fallen angels, but falling ones. By heaven! they stick the shears, while we stand like patient sheep to be sheared, more frequently into our skin than into our wool! If I were to go over the

bridge of St. Angelo in Rome, I should think of women, because there are ten angels standing as statues upon it, each one of whom is represented with a different instrument of torture—one with the nails, another with the reed, a third with the dice, &c.; and thus every one holds in its hands a different instrument for torturing us poor lambs of God. Whom do you suppose, for instance, that your yesterday's Palladium, your unknown beauty, is to bind with the wedding-ring, as with a nose-ring, to the marriage bed-post? But I must first describe her to you. She is a glorious creature—poetical, an enthusiastical admirer of learned men and the British, consequently of me, and, on the latter account, resides with a noble English lady, who is a sort of companion to Lady Craven and the margrave yonder in Fantaisie. She has nothing, and takes nothing, is poor and proud, thoughtlessly bold and virtuous, and is named Natalie Aquiliana. Now, whom do you suppose she is to marry? A spirit whose egg-shell was cracked open a few weeks too soon, and who now, with yellow hairy feathers, pips at our toes; one who in wedding-rings imitates Heliogabalus, who daily put on a new ring; a fellow whom I would sneeze over the north pole, and whom I need describe least of all to you, as you have already described him yourself, and whom you know as soon as I name him. The beautiful creature is to marry the Venner Rosa von Meyern."

Firmian did not fall out of the clouds, but right into them. In short, the unknown Natalie is the niece of the Heimlicher, of whom Leibgeber wrote some account in a letter in the first volume.

"Listen!" continued Leibgeber. "I will, however, let myself be cut up and chopped into smaller crumbs

than Great Poland,* into little particles such as could not cover a Hebrew vowel, if any thing comes of the affair; for I will prevent it."

Since, as is well known, he spoke to the maiden every day, and she was devotedly attached to his spotless soul and bold spirit, all that he would require, in order to break off the new marriage, would be to repeat and affirm what Siebenkäs had related of her bridegroom elect. His acquaintance with her, and his resemblance to Siebenkäs, had occasioned the mistake she had made yesterday, in confounding Firmian with the person he went to meet. Most of my readers will urge against me and Leibgeber the objection made also by the Advocate, that Natalie's love did not accord with her character, and that a marriage for money was inconsistent with her indifference to money; but, in fact, she had as yet seen nothing of the gaudy fly-catcher Rosa, save his Esau's hand—that is, his handwriting, his Jacob's voice. He had written to her nothing but irreprehensible, sentimental letters of insurance (papers full of Cupid's shafts and pins), and had thus guaranteed the paper-nobility of his heart. The Heimlicher, besides, had written to his niece that on St. Pancras-day, the 12th May (consequently in four days), the Venner would come and introduce himself to her, and if she jilted him she should never again call herself von Blaise's niece, but might starve, in God's name, in her Schraplau.** But, to be quite honest, I have not had above three of Rosa's letters, and those

* He does not allude to the last still more particular analysis of Poland, but to the first.

** A little town in the county Mansfeld, belonging to the Elector of Brandenburg

scarcely the best specimens, more than a minute in my hand, and an hour in my pocket; and, to say the truth, they were not bad, and certainly much more moral than their author.

Just as Leibgeber had said he would act the part of consistory, and divorce Natalie and Rosa even before they were married, she drove up with some of her female friends, and got out of the carriage; but instead of accompanying them to the general promenade, she went alone through a solitary sidepath to the so-called temple. In her haste, she had not seen her friend Leibgeber sitting opposite the stables; for the Baireuth frequenters of "Hermitage," ever since the time of the margrave, have been used to sit in a little wood, always cooled by shade and breezes, in front of the extensive farm-buildings and stables, having the most beautiful prospect close behind their backs, for which they can easily change the blank wall, on which the eye pastures, if they only get up and walk a little beyond the wood on either side.

Leibgeber told the Advocate he would conduct him to her immediately, as she would be sitting in the temple as usual, whence, over the artificial shrubberies, she enjoyed the enchanting prospect of the city-towers and western mountains, in the light of the departing sun. He added, that unfortunately she paid too little regard to appearances, going alone to the summer-house, and thereby occasioning considerable annoyance to the English lady, who, like her countrywomen in general, never went any where alone, and did not even trust herself to approach a male wardrobe without an insurance-company and bible-society of women. He said he had it from good authority, that a British lady

never pictured a man to herself without at the same time surrounding him by the necessary images of women, who might bridle and restrain him, should he happen to take it into his head to conduct himself in the four chambers of her brain with as much licence as if he were at home there.

They found Natalie in the open temple, with some papers in her hand. "I bring you," said Leibgeber, "our author of the 'Selection from the Devil's Papers,' which, as I perceive, you are just now reading. Permit me to introduce him to you."

Blushing slightly at having confounded Firmian with Leibgeber, in Fantaisie, she said very kindly to Siebenkäs, "I could almost mistake you again, Mr. Advocate, for your friend, and, indeed, in a mental point of view. Your satires are often just like his, and it is only the more serious appendices, which I am just now reading, and which please me much, that do not seem to have been composed by him."*

I have no leisure at this moment to defend, in long printed pages, Leibgeber's unauthorised communication to one friend of the papers of another. In answer to such of my readers as may exact and observe scrupulous delicacy in these matters, suffice it to say, that Leibgeber took for granted that every one who loved him should help to love his other friends; and that Siebenkäs, and even Natalie, looked upon his bold communication in no other light than that of a friendly circular, and of his presupposing a triumvirate of sympathy.

* The poetico-philosophical chapters of the "Selection," which was published many years ago in Gera, and which went off like wildfire, as waste paper.

Natalie looked kindly and comparingly at both, especially at Leibgeber, whose dog she stroked. She seemed to be seeking points of dissimilarity between them; for, in fact, Siebenkäs did not appear to her exactly to resemble his friend, but to be taller, thinner, and younger-looking in the face; but this was in consequence of a habit which Leibgeber, whose shoulders and chest were of a somewhat stronger make, had contracted of bending his singular and more earnest countenance forward when he spoke, as if he were speaking to some one in the earth. He himself said that he never had looked young, not even as an infant at his baptism, as his godfather and godmother could vouch for him; and he could scarcely become young again before his old age and second childhood. But if Leibgeber stood erect, and Siebenkäs stooped a little, then they resembled each other closely enough. But these hints are more for those who may write their passports than for any one else.

We may congratulate the Advocate of Kuhschnappel on this opportunity of enjoying a few minutes' conversation with a woman of rank, and of so much cultivation of mind—sufficiently cultivated, indeed, to appreciate satirical compositions; and he himself desired nothing so much as that such a phoenix, of which, in life, he had only seen a few ashes, or a phoenix-feather or two in books, might not flutter away again immediately, but that it might be his lot to listen to a long conversation between her and Leibgeber, and help to spin it himself, when suddenly her Baireuth friends came running with the intelligence that the waters were about to play that moment, and there was no time to be lost. The whole party, therefore, took the path

down to the water-works; and all that Siebenkäs could now do was to seek to remain as near as possible to the most noble spectatress.

Arrived below, they stood on the brink of the basin, and looked at the beautiful play of waters, which have doubtless long ago played before the reader, either on the spot, or on the paper of the various writers of travels, who have sufficiently expressed their admiration and astonishment at them. All the mythological demi-gods and demi-beasts spouted out water; and out of the peopled world of water-gods grew a crystal forest, whose descending branches again rooted in the earth, like lianas. They diverted themselves a long time with the gossiping mingling water-world; till, at last, the flutter and growth of the *jets d'eau* subsided, and the transparent lily-stalks became every moment shorter to the eye.

"Whence is it," said Natalie to Siebenkäs, "that a waterfall raises the spirits and heart, but that this visible sinking, this dying of the water-streams from above downwards, gives me a feeling of anxiety every time I witness it? In life, this terrible falling-in of heights is never made visible to us."

While the Advocate of the Poor was reflecting upon a very correct answer to this true expression of sentiment, Natalie suddenly plunged into the water to save a child who had fallen in at the distance of a few steps from the place where she was standing; for the water had already risen to more than half a man's height. Before the men who stood near, and who might have saved the child more easily, had thought about it, she had already accomplished it: and she was right; for, in this case, rapidity without calculation was the good

and beautiful action. She lifted up the child, and handed it to the women; but Siebenkäs and Leibgeber seized her hands, and easily pulled her up, blushing in soul and body, to the banks of the basin.

"What does it signify? it won't hurt me," said she, laughing, to the alarmed Advocate, and then hurried away with her friends, who were struck dumb with astonishment; but first she begged Leibgeber to come, without fail, on the following evening, to Fantaisie, with his friend.

"That is a matter of course," answered he; "but first I shall come early in the morning alone."

The friends now mutually wished for one another's society, and for privacy. Leibgeber, under this fresh excitement, could scarcely wait until they reached the birch-wood, where he intended spinning to an end their previous conversation about Firmian's domestic and conjugal position. With regard to Natalie, he observed to his astonished friend, *en passant*, that this was what he so much loved and admired in her, namely, her decision of character and straightforwardness, both in word and deed, and her manly cheerfulness, upon which the world, and poverty, and accidents, only floated, vanishing again like fleecy, shining, summer clouds, without obscuring her day.

"As respects yourself and your Lenette," he continued, when they had reached the solitude of the wood, as deliberately as if he had been speaking on the subject up to this moment, "if I were in your place I would take a dissolvent, and would get rid of the heavy gall-stone of marriage. If you go on scratching and scraping the bonds of wedlock with your hair-saws and bone-saws for years, you will not be able

any longer to endure it for pain. The ecclesiastical court will make a bold cut and rent, and you are sundered."

Siebenkäs was terror-stricken at the idea of a divorce; not that he did not wish it as the only possible opening in the thunder-clouds that surrounded him; not that he grudged it to Lenette, or the marriage with the Schulrath which would result from it; but because he knew that, notwithstanding the similarity of her desires, Lenette would never consent to a violent separation, from a feeling of shame and regard to appearances. On their way to a divorce, too, they would have to pass through cruel cutting hours, full of heart-anguish and nervous fever; besides, they could scarcely defray the expenses of a marriage, not to speak of a divorce. Another consideration also that pained him too deeply was, the thought that he should see the poor innocent creature, who had trembled near him in so many cold storms of life, pass away for ever out of his arms and his room,—and, moreover, with the handkerchief in her hand.

All these considerations he urged, more or less warmly, to his friend, and concluded with this last: "I confess to you, too, that if she were to go away from me with all her goods and chattels, and leave me alone in the empty room, as in a sepulchre, and near all the cleared blank places where we formerly sat many a glad and cheerful hour together, and saw flowers blossom around us, she could never pass by my window, especially if she bore my name, without a voice within me exclaiming, 'Throw thyself down, and fall shivered at her feet.' Would it not be ten times wiser," continued he, changing his tone, and endeavouring to

speak more gaily, "for us to wait until I were to fall down in a similar manner in the room (or of what use is my vertigo?), and thus tumble out the window and the world together, in a more agreeable manner? Friend Hain* will take his long erasing-knive, and scratch my name, with other blots, out of her marriage-certificate and wedding-ring."

Contrary to all expectation, this only seemed to make his friend more lively and merry. "Do so," said he, "and die! The cost of the funeral cannot possibly amount to as much as the costs of the other separation; and, besides, you are a subscriber to the Burial Insurance Company." Siebenkäs looked at him with astonishment. Leibgeber, however, continued in the most indifferent tone: "But I must tell you that little good will come of it for us two, if you intend to be a long time saddling and dawdling, and don't die before a year or two. For my own part, I should consider it much more to the purpose, if you were to go at once from Baireuth to Kuhschuappel, and, immediately on your arrival, were to lay yourself on your bed of illness and death-bed, and die. But I will give you my reasons. In the first place, your Lenette's half-year of mourning will be concluded just before advent, and she would not then need a dispensation for the advent, but only a dispensation for the period of mourning, supposing she married Pelzstiefel before Christmas. It would also suit me better. I should then disappear among the world's crowd, and not see you again for a very long time. Nor can it be a matter of indifference to yourself to die soon; for the

* Death.—Tr.

sooner you are appointed to the office of 'inspector,' the more it will be to your advantage."

"This is the first time, dear Henry," answered Firmian, "that I have not understood one word of your jest."

Leibgeber, with a disquieted countenance, in which was written a whole future universal history, and which both betrayed and occasioned the greatest expectation, drew a paper out of his pocket, and handed it in silence to his friend. It was a letter from the Count of Vaduz, appointing Leibgeber to the inspectorship of the upper bailiwick of Vaduz. He then gave him an open letter written by the Count's own hand. While Firmian was reading it, he took out his pocket almanack, and muttered coldly to himself, "From quarter-day—(louder) does not the letter say so? from the quarter-day after Whitsuntide I am to enter on my office; that is, from to-day, being Stanislaus-day. Ah, listen! Stanislaus-day! One, two, three, four—four and a half weeks!"

When Firmian joyfully gave it back to him, he pushed it away and said, "I read it before you did—put it into your pocket, but write to the Count to-day, rather than defer it until to-morrow."

Thereupon Henry knelt down in solemn, passionate, humorous enthusiasm, that was increased by the wine he had drunk, in the middle of a long narrow glade, which, running between the lofty trees of the thickest part of the shrubbery, seemed like a subterranean passage, and which, in the far perspective in the east, was bounded by the weather-cock on the steeple of a church situated in a hollow, as by a turnstile. He knelt down towards the west, and gazed fixedly through the long

green hollow way upon the evening sun, which was sinking to the earth, like a bright falling-star; and the broad light streamed from heaven into the long green path, like gilded forest-water of the spring-time. He looked fixedly at it, and, blinded and surrounded by the halo, commenced thus: "Should there be a good spirit now hovering round me, or my genius or his near me, or should thy soul be yet living above thy ashes, thou old, deeply-buried, good father, oh! then, approach nearer, old dark spirit, and grant thy foolish son, who is still limping about in the fluttering dress of a body, the first and last favour, by this day entering into Firmian's heart, and, while thou art shaking it well, holding in it the following speech:

"Die, Firmian, for my son's sake, though only in appearance and in jest; put away your name, and take his, which was formerly your own; go to Vaduz as inspector, and pass yourself off for him. My poor son, like the round *jou-jou de Normandie* upon which he is sitting, and which whirls round the sun on strings of sunbeams, would also like to spin round a little more on the *jou-jou* himself. The ring of eternity is yet hanging before the rest of you parrots, and you hop upon it, and can rock yourselves to and fro in it, but he sees no ring; oh! give the poor parrot the joy of hopping about the bird-cage perch of earth, until, having wound the thread of his life sixty times, to a skein, the reel rings and snaps, and the thread is broken, and his fun is over. O good spirit of my father, move the heart of my friend this day, and guide his tongue, that it may not say 'No,' when I ask him, 'Wilt thou?'" Blinded by the evening radiance, he

sought to find Firmian's hand, and said, "Where is thy hand, dear friend? and say not 'No!'"

But Firmian, carried away by his feelings, knelt down,—for, in the enthusiasm of his long-restrained earnestness, Leibgeber attracted the heart irresistibly, —and without a word, and tearful, like an evening shadow, he knelt before the heart of his friend, and falling upon his bosom, and pressing it closely and firmly on his own, he said to him in a low tone, from inability to speak aloud, "I will die for you in a thousand ways—as you please; do but name them. But speak clearly what you wish; I swear beforehand to grant you every thing. By the soul of your dead father, I will willingly give you my life; and, as it is, I have nothing more to give."

Henry answered in an unusually subdued tone of voice, "We will now go up and mingle with the throng and the people of Baireuth. Surely I must have a dropsy on the chest to-day, or a hot mineral-spring, and my waistcoat is the enclosure round the fountain: a heart ought to have on a swimming-girdle in such a vapour-bath."

Up there, at the covered table beneath the trees, near the guests assembled for the spring wake, among the joyous, the conquest of emotion was not so difficult: there Henry hastily unrolled the long plan of his castles in the air, and the building-grant of his Babylonian tower. He had given his sacred word of honour to the Count of Vaduz, whose ears and heart expanded and opened hungrily to him, to return as his inspector; but his object was to let himself be represented by his dear coadjutor and substitute, *cum spe succedenti*, Firmian, who in humour and person was

such a tautology of himself, that the count would have examined and measured both in vain in order to select one of them. In bad years the situation yielded an annual income of twelve hundred dollars; therefore as much as the whole amount of Firmian's inheritance, which was sealed up by a lawsuit. By resuming his old name of Leibgeber, Siebenkäs would thus regain what he had lost by abandoning it. "For," continued Henry, "since I have read your devilish selection, I can't bear it, get over it, or swallow it down any longer, in any conceivable way, that you should continue to sit as unicorn, and solitary, and hermit, and unknown, in that cursed worn-out hole Kuhschnappel. And can you take as much time for consideration as the chancellor takes to shake out his pipe, when I tell you that I can't fill any office in the world but that of a *grazioso*, while you can fill every one gloriously; and that I can accept no situation in a college but that of a iester, because, though I possess more knowledge than any of the professors, I can only use it for satire, and because my language is a patchwork *lingua franca*, my head a Proteus, and I myself am a beautiful compilation of the devil and his grandmother? And even if I could, I *would* not. What! in my blooming youth I am to neigh and paw like a beast of office—like a state-prisoner in the dungeon, and trave* of a counting-house—without enjoying any more beautiful prospect than the saddle and harness suspended in my stable and stall, while out of doors the most beautiful Parnassus mountains and Tempe valleys lie spread out in vain before the horse of the Muses? Now, in the years when the milk of my life is about to throw up

* A wooden frame for shoeing unruly horses.—*Tr.*

some cream,—for, as it is, the years will come soon enough when a man grows sour, and changes into whey and curds,—shall I throw the rennet of an appointment into my morning's milk? But you must whistle in another key; for you are already half a place-man, and a whole married man. Ah! it will surpass all the Bremen contributions to the pleasures of the understanding and of wit, all comic romances and comic operas, when I go with you to Kuhschnappel, and you there become extinguished, first making your will; and after I have paid you the last honours, once more speedily arise, and advance to still greater honours—not so much by becoming one of the blessed, as by becoming an inspector—not so much by appearing after your death before a strict tribunal, as by sitting upon one yourself. Fun upon fun! I can't yet quite discern all the consequences. The insurance-company must pay your afflicted widow (you can repay the establishment as soon as you are in cash). Death will cut off your ring-finger, swollen with the wedding-ring. Your widow can marry again—yourself, if she pleases; and you too.”

All at once Leibgeber struck his thigh forty times, and exclaimed, “Ay, ay, ay, ay, ay! . . . I can hardly wait until you die. Listen! your death can produce two widows. I will persuade Natalie to insure herself a yearly pension of two hundred dollars upon your death from the Royal Prussian General Widow's Provident Fund Institution; you can pay it back again as soon as you have the means. You must secretly give a bread and fruit basket to your future widow, when she gives a basket* to the Venner. Supposing you

* “To give a basket” means to refuse an offer of marriage.—*Tr.*

could not pay, and were *really* to die, I should be still living, and no treasury should be the loser the moment I had money again;" for Leibgeber lived in a secret intermitting fever, which he himself has never explained, between getting poor and rich, or, as he himself expressed it, between inhaling and exhaling the life-breath (*aura vitalis*) of money. Any one else except Leibgeber, who played so boldly with life,—whose burning fire for right, sincerity, and disinterested justice, had beamed upon his friend for years, as from Pharaoh's heights,—would have startled our Siebenkäs, especially in his character of Advocate,—perhaps even have angered, instead of overpowering him. But Leibgeber thoroughly imbued him; indeed, burnt him through and through with his ethereal spirit of humour, and hurried him on, without being able to stop, to a mimic deception, which had no selfish aims of lying or deceit.

But Firmian at least, in the intoxication of his spirit, still maintained enough power over himself to think of the danger to which he might expose his friend. "But suppose any one," said he, "should ever meet my true Henry Leibgeber, whose name I steal, alongside of me, a coiner of false names,—what will happen then?"

"No one will find me," said Henry. "For, look you! as soon as you have resumed your old, canonical, genuine name of Leibgeber, and given up my Firmian Stanislaus, which was created over a stormy, baptismal font,—and God grant that you do so!—I shall then fling myself under quite unheard-of names (it may be that, in order to celebrate three hundred and sixty-five birthdays, I shall borrow in turn the name of each

day in the calendar),—I shall fling myself, I say, off the continent into the ocean; and shall drive myself about with my back-fins, belly-fins, and other fins, through the floods and bays of life, to the muddy sea of death; and then it will probably be long before I see you again." He gazed fixedly on the setting sun, sinking behind Baireuth; his motionless eyes beamed with a moister glow, as he continued, more slowly: "Firmian, this day, in the almanac, is Stanislaus-day, and your name-day and mine, and, at the same time, the death-day of this wandering name, for you must abandon it after your mock death. I, poor devil, for the first time for many a year past, will be serious to-day. Go you home alone through the village of Johannes: I will go by the avenue, and we will meet again in the hotel. By heaven! here every thing is so beautiful and rosy, as if the 'Ermitage' were a piece of the sun: but don't be long!"

But a bitter pain came over Henry's face, scoring it with furrows; and he turned aside the bas-relief imagery of sorrow, and his blinded eyes, full of radiance and water, and hastened away past the spectators, with a countenance that wore the expression of having the attention fixed upon something else, and disappeared among the shrubbery paths.

Firmian stood alone, with moist eyes, before the mild sun, which melted into colours over the green world. The deep gold-mine of an evening cloud, under the influence of the near sun's fire, dripped down from the ether upon the neighbouring hills, and the streaming evening-gold hung transparently on the yellow-green buds, and on the pale-red mountain-tops, and an immeasurable smoke, as if from an altar, cast,

shifting, a strange reflection of enchantment and liquid transparent distant colours on the mountains; and the mountains and the happy earth, reflecting the sun, seemed to receive the declining orb in their embraces but when the sun sunk beneath the earth, then suddenly the angel of a higher life flew into the beaming world, which, to the tearful eyes of Firmian, trembled like an expanded, flickering, fiery meteor, and the angel stepped forth, flashing like the day, in the midst of the night torch-dance of the moving living creatures, and they all grew pale and stood still. When he dried his eyes, the earth was stiller and paler, and night came dewy and wintry out of the woods.

But the melted human heart now pined for its relatives, and for all whom it loved and knew, and it throbbed insatiate in this solitary prison of life, and wished to love all mankind. Oh, on such an evening the soul is too unfortunate which has resigned much or lost much!

In a sweet trance, Firmian went through the hanging gardens of the flowery fragrance—through the midst of the American flowers which open beneath our night-heaven—through the sleeping apartment of closed fields and amid dripping blossoms; and the half-moon stood upon the ramparts of the heavenly temple, in the midday radiance which the sun cast up to her from the deep, over the earth and its evening red.

As Firmian passed through the embowered village of Johannes, whose dwellings were scattered amidst orchards, the evening bells from distant villages rocked the slumbering Spring to sleep with their cradle-songs,

and Æolian harps, breathed on by the breeze, seemed to send forth their tones from the evening red, and their melodies flowed gently into the wide region of sleep, and there became dreams. His overflowing heart pined for love; and he was obliged, from very longing, to press his flowers hastily into the white hands of a beautiful child in Johannes, who was playing with a willow-wand, merely for the sake of touching human hands.

Good Firmian! go with your softened soul to your softened friend. His inner man also stretches forth its arms towards an image, and you are nowhere so happy to-day as with one another. When Firmian entered into their common chamber it was only illumined by the red twilight. His Henry turned, and they fell silently into each other's arms, and with bowed heads poured forth all the tears that burned within them; but some were tears of joy, and they concluded the embrace but not the silence. Henry threw himself, in his clothes, on the bed, and covered himself up. Firmian sunk upon the second near it, and drops of happiness fell from his closed eyes. After some intoxicating hours, heated by fancies, dreams, and sorrows, a soft light fell upon his burning eyelids—he opened them; the pale glowing moon hung near the window, and he arose. . . . But when he beheld his friend, silent and pale, like a shadow of the moon on the wall, leaning against the window, and suddenly Rust's melody, like the voice of a nightingale, arose from a neighbouring garden,

"Not for this terrestrial land
Friendship ties her holy band,"

he sank back again under the pressure of a bitter remembrance, and of too great an emotion, and a spasm closed his sorrowful eyes, and he said, in a hollow voice, "Henry, believe in immortality: how can we love if we decay!"

"Peace, peace!" said Henry; "to-day I celebrate my name-day, and that is enough; for man has no birthday, and consequently no death-day."

CHAPTER XIII.

The Human Clock. The Refusal. The Venner.

WHEN, in a former chapter, I spoke of short sleepers, who awake six hours earlier than their antipodes, I think I did well not to insert the model of a clock, long ago invented by me, among the thickly crowded events of the twelfth chapter, but to keep it for the thirteenth. Into this I now insert it and put it up. I believe the flower-clock of Linnæus in Upsal (*horologium floræ*), whose wheels are the sun and earth, and whose index-figures are flowers, of which one always awakens and opens later than another, was what secretly suggested my conception of the human clock. I formerly occupied two chambers in Scheerau, in the middle of the market-place; from the front room I overlooked the whole market-place and the royal buildings, from the back one the botanical garden. Whoever now dwells in these two rooms possesses a capital harmony, arranged to his hand, between the flower-clock in the garden and the human clock in the market-place.

At three o'clock the yellow meadow goat's-beard opens, and brides awake, and the stable-boy begins to rattle and feed the horses beneath the lodger. . . . At four o'clock (if it is Sunday) the little hawk's-weed awakes, also holy communicants, who are clocks with chimes, and the bakers. At five, kitchen-maids, dairy-maids, and buttercups awake; at six, the sow-thistle and cooks. At seven o'clock many of the ladies' maids are awake in the palace, the salad in my botani-

cal garden, and some tradeswomen. At eight o'clock all their daughters awake, the little yellow mouse-ear, all the colleges, the leaves of flowers, of pie-crust, and of deeds. At nine o'clock the female nobility already begins to stir, the marygold, and even many young ladies, who have come from the country on a visit, begin to look out of their windows. Between ten and eleven o'clock the court-ladies, and the whole staff of lords of the bedchamber, the green colewort, and the Alpine dandelion, and the reader of the princess, rouse themselves out of their morning sleep; and the whole palace, considering that the morning sun gleams so brightly to-day from the lofty sky, through the coloured silk curtains, curtails a little of its slumber. At twelve o'clock the prince, at one his wife and the carnation, have their eyes open in their flower-vase. What awakes late in the afternoon, at four o'clock, is only the red hawk's-weed and the night-watchman, as cuckoo-clock, and these two only tell the time, as evening-clocks and moon-clocks. From the hot eyes of the poor devil who, like the jalap-plant, first opens them at five o'clock, we will turn our own, in pity, aside. It is a sick man who has taken the jalap, and who only exchanges the fever-fancies of being griped with hot pincers for waking gripes.

I could never know when it was two o'clock, because at that time, together with a thousand other stout gentlemen, and with the little yellow mouse-ear, I always fell asleep; but at three o'clock in the afternoon, and at three in the morning, I awoke as regularly as though I were a repeater.

Thus we mortals may be a flower-clock for higher beings when our flower-leaves close upon our last bed;

or sand-clocks, when the sand of our life is so run down that it is reversed in the other world; or picture-clocks, because, when our death-bell here below strikes and rings, our image steps forth from its case into the next world. On each event of the kind, when seventy years of human life have passed away, they may perhaps say, "What! another hour already gone? Good God! how the time flies!"

I also am made aware of that by this digression. Firmian and Henry arose cheerfully in the morning; but the former could not stay quiet a moment all the day long, either in a chair, or in the room. The opera buffa and seria of his mock death continually drew up its curtain before his soul, and revealed its burlesque scenes. As was ever the case, he was made more than usually humorous by his friend's presence and example, who ruled over him by his inward similarity. Leibgeber, who had already exhausted and wandered through all the scenes and stage-shiftings of this mock-death in his fancy many weeks ago, now thought little about it. The new thing which occupied him, was the determination to pull the wick, that is to say, the bride, out of Rosa's bridal torch, which was already moulded and painted. Henry was always violent, free, bold, indignant, and implacable against injustice; and this moral indignation, as in the affair of Rosa and of Blaise, sometimes wore too much the appearance of revenge. Firmian was milder, more indulgent, and forgiving; often, indeed, apparently at the cost of his honour. It would have been impossible for him to have drawn the letter-writing lover out of the bleeding soul of the beautiful Natalie with Henry's surgical instrument.

On going to her to-day in "Fantaisie," his friend was obliged to promise that he would be most tender in his behaviour, and for the moment be silent on the subject of the Royal Prussian Widow's Provident Fund. It would certainly have wounded Natalie's feelings of honour very deeply, if in her moral separation from the immoral Venner, the slightest hint had been given of a metallic compensation for a spiritual loss; she deserved to conquer, and was able to do so, even with the prospect of impoverishment before her.

Henry returned late, with an expression of countenance somewhat disturbed, but nevertheless gratified. Rosa was cast off, and Natalie wounded. The English lady was at Anspach, with Lady Craven, and helped to eat the butter, which the latter made, as well as books. When he had read off to the Roman lady, as the English women generally called Natalie, the whole black-board and sin-register of the Venner, seriously indeed, but rather loudly and without much softening the truth, she rose up with that grace which is the characteristic of self-sacrificing enthusiasm, and said: "If you have been deceived in this as little as you yourself are capable of deceiving, and if I may place as much confidence in your friend as in yourself, I give you my sacred word that nothing shall persuade or force me; but in a few days he will be here in person, and I owe it to him as well as to my own honour, to hear him, since I have given my letters into his hands; but how hard it is that I must speak so coldly!"

Each moment the red rose on her glowing face changed more perceptibly into a white rose. She supported her head on her hand; and as her eyes filled, and at last overflowed, she said, "Don't mind me; I

shall keep my word; then, cost what it will, I shall tear myself away from my friend, and return to my poor relations in Schraplau. As it is, I have lived in the great world long enough, but not too long."

Henry's unusual seriousness had overpowered her; she had unshaken confidence in his integrity, for a strange reason, which was, that he had not yet fallen in love, but had only formed a friendship with her, and consequently did not restrict the measure of her affection by his own. She would perhaps have been angry with the married fiscal of her bridegroom, Firmian, had he not possessed three or four of the best excuses; first, his mental resemblance to Leibgeber in general; then, his physiognomy, which now, in its paleness, seemed quite transfigured; further, his touching evening-journal; and, lastly, his whole, gentle, affectionate nature. In spite of the pain she had at heart, she now repeated, to Leibgeber's great joy, the request she had made yesterday, that he would bring his friend in the evening. Let no one, however, be offended with her on account of her half-mourning for the setting Vener, nor with her erroneous impression of him; since we all know that the dear girls so often confound sensibility with integrity, letters with deeds, and ink-tears with an honest warm blood.

In the afternoon Leibgeber conducted the Advocate to her. Aquiliana received him at first with a passing blush, and then with a slight expression of pride, from a feeling of shame, but yet with the kindness which she owed to his interest in her future welfare. She resided in the apartment of the English lady, and the blooming pleasure-valley lay spread out before it, like a world before a sun. Such a full pleasure-garden

possesses this advantage, that a stranger advocate is better able to fasten the spider-threads of his discourse to its branches, until the thread has become spun into a beaming web of art, and hangs suspended in the free air. Firmian could never attain the perfection of those people of the world, who, in order to commence spinning a conversation, require nothing but a listener; who, like the leaf-frogs, know how to attach themselves to the smoothest surfaces, upon which they hop; who are even able, indeed, to do what the leaf-frogs cannot do, maintain themselves in a vacuum, as well of air as of objects. But a man of independent mind, like Siebenkäs, could not long remain embarrassed by his ignorance of habits and customs, not even at court, but must soon recover his freedom by his innate superiority to external circumstances, and by unassuming simplicity readily supply the place of the artificial and assuming manners of the world.

He had yesterday seen this same Natalie in the cheerful enjoyment of her powers, both of nature and of friendship, smiling and captivating every heart, and he had seen her crown the beautiful evening with the boldness of sacrifice; but to-day there was so little left of the tender, bright joys! A beautiful face is never more beautiful than in the hour that follows the bitter moment when tears, drawn forth by the loss of a heart, have passed over it; for in the hour of bitterness itself, the grieving beauty would probably excite our sorrow and sympathy too much.

If it would have been of any service to her, Firmian would joyfully have died in a more serious way than he projected for this lovely creature, who hid the knife

of sacrifice that had been driven into her heart, and allowed it to smart there, that its bleeding might be delayed. Is it strange, then, that the sympathy between the two should grow deeper every moment with the falling sand in the hour-glass, when we reflect that while the trio were under the influence of an unusual degree of earnestness (for even Leibgeber was overtaken by it), every bosom filled itself with gentle wishes, moved by the gala beauty of spring,—that this day Firmian with his pale sick form, marked by old sorrows, shone pleasantly like evening sunshine upon an eye weakened by tears; that he was also recommended to her favour by the (singular) merit of having embittered some of the infidelities at least of her faithless lover, and prevented others; that every note he touched was in the minor key of a soft heart, because he sought to cast into shade and atone in some degree for his agency in laying waste all at once so many hopes and joys of this innocent and unknown lady; and that even his greater share of respectful, modest reserve helped to adorn him by contrasting with the familiarity of his image, Henry?

All these charms of circumstance, which win the female world more than those of the person, the Advocate possessed in Natalie's eyes. In his, she had yet greater, and they were all new ones; such as, her acquirements (in art and science), her masculine enthusiasm, her more refined manner, and her flattering behaviour to himself, with which as yet none of the fair sex had honoured him,—a charm which plunges many a man unaccustomed to female society, not only into rapture, but into marriage; and the two last and greatest charms were, that the whole affair was fortuitous

and uncommon, and that Lenette was in every thing her antipodes.

Poor Firmian! at the feet of your life, even when it becomes a brook of pearls, there is ever a board of warning! In this warm temperature, the marriage-ring must of necessity pinch you—as in general all rings press tightly in a warm bath, and hang loosely in a cold one.

But either some devilish Naiad, or a malicious sea-god, took the greatest pleasure in disturbing, muddling, and darkening Firmian's sea of life, when it was shining enchantingly either with phosphorescent sea animalculæ or some innocent electric matter, and when his ship left a beaming wake behind it; for just as pleasure and the glory of the garden were growing every moment greater and the embarrassment diminishing—the sorrowful remembrance of the late loss receding more into the background,—and the forte-piano or the fortissimo-pianissimo and vocal pieces were about to commence,—in short, just as all the honey-cells of their orangery of joy, their permitted Egyptian flesh-pots, and a deep communion-cup and love communion-cup were opened,—what should spring into the room on two feet but a great blue-bottle fly, which had often flown into Firmian's cup of joy!

The Venner Everard Rosa von Meyern, gracefully attired in saffron-coloured garments, entered the room to pay his bride the ambassador's privilege of a first visit! In all his life he had never done otherwise than arrive either too late or too soon; in like manner as he was never serious, but either whining or wanton. The form of three of the faces was now that of a long duodecimo,—Leibgeber alone did not stretch his upon

the wire-drawer's bench, but dyed it in the colour-pot and furnace of a red colour, because he had a particular aversion to dandies and maiden-hawks. Everard had brought with him a conceit, ready prepared for his first appearance, borrowed from Stolberg's Homer; he intended to imitate Homer's heroes, and to ask Aquiliana, on his entrance, whether she were a goddess or a mortal, since he could only contend with the latter. But, on beholding the male pair which, like a double-barrelled gun, the devil pointed at his brain, every thing in the latter became cheesy, and curdy, and stiff. He could not bring the conceit to bear, even for twenty kisses. It was five days before the small contents of his skull were sufficiently recovered to enable him to deliver the idea in good preservation to a distant relation of mine. How otherwise should I know it? Indeed, nothing embarrassed his tactics so much in the society of women as a man; and he would rather lay siege to a whole convent of women alone than to a couple of novices, to say nothing of a canoress, if one single miserable man happened to be present. Such a standing troop of players never acted in the château of "Fantaisie" as that which I here behold presented to my brush. Natalie was lost in impolite amazement, and in quietly comparing this original edition with the ideal she had formed from his letters. The Venner, who took for granted that the result of this comparison was quite the reverse of what it really was, would have wished to have been a palpable contradiction to himself, and his own antipodes, if he could have managed it; I mean, if he could have shewn himself at one and the same time offended and cold towards Natalie, because of finding

such a hateful pair in her company, and intimate and tender, in order that on beholding his harvest and vintage the poor couple might be filled with envy and vexation. As he was as much surprised at her appearance as she at his, only far more agreeably, and as he reflected that there would be plenty of time for his revenge, he now preferred boasting, in order to season and bless the visit of the two advocates near him with envy. He also had the advantage over both of them in possessing a body of light artillery, and he brought his force of physical charms into action sooner than either of them could bring theirs. Siebenkäs thought of nothing nearer than his—wife. On Rosa's arrival he had pastured on the thought as on a sour meadow; for his self-love was not touched by the rough bark of the married hand, as softly as by snail's horns, or a virgin's downy fingers; but now the thought of Lenette was a sweet meadow, because his jealousy of Rosa, which was domiciled in two places, was less excited by Lenette's behaviour than by the relationship in which the Venner stood to Natalie. Henry's eyes grew fiercer in grimness, and wandered up and down Rosa's summer hareskin of gall-coloured silk with bilious looks. In the fidget of his irritation he groped in his waistcoat-pocket, and clutched the profile of the Heimlicher von Blaise, which it will be remembered he had cut out, as like as two peas, on the evening when he trampled on the glass wig, and in regard to which nothing, for a whole year, had caused him so much vexation as that instead of lying in his pocket it had not been on the gallows, where, on the evening of his departure, he might have stuck it with a pin. He drew out the silhouette, and, whilst he was pulling it about,

he glided softly to and fro between her and Rosa, and muttered to Siebenkäs, with his eyes fixed on the Venner, "*à la silhouette*."*

Everard's self-love divined these flattering but involuntary sacrifices of the wounded self-love of the others; and, becoming ever more and more supercilious towards the Advocate of the Poor, he related fragments of his journeys, gave greetings from his acquaintance, and put importunate questions to the embarrassed girl concerning the reception of his letters. The brothers, Siebenkäs and Leibgeber, sounded a retreat; but, like true men, they were a little displeased with the innocent Natalie, just as if she could have prevented the entrance of the sponsus and letter-husband by any such rude apprentice-greeting as the following: "Sir, you can never be my master, even supposing you to be nothing worse than a rascal, fool, scarecrow, fop, &c.!" But must not all of us (for I don't think I am an exception) strike our bony sinful bosoms, and confess that we spit fire whenever modest girls omit doing so at those whom we have blackened and excommunicated in their presence,—that, further, we expect to find them quick to discard wicked squires, although they are not quick to receive them,—and that they should care as little about the forced marches and honourable retreats of their cottiers and other feudal tenants as the rest of us fief-holders do,—and, lastly, that we are offended with them not so much on account of their infidelity as for an innocent opportunity of becoming unfaithful! Heaven improve the persons of whom I have just spoken!

* The profile took its other name from the Comptroller-General *Silhouette*. In Paris, an empty blank physiognomy is called a *face à la silhouette*.

Firmian and Henry roamed about for some hours in the enchanted valley, full of magic flutes, magic vibrations, and magic mirrors, but without ears and without eyes. Their conversation upon the event made their heads as hot as balloon-furnaces, and Leibgeber blew out of Fama's trumpet *a posteriori* nothing but blasts of satirical abuse against every woman of Baireuth whom he saw walking in the gardens. He represented women as the worst craft in which a man could embark upon the open sea of life,—slave-ships indeed, and bucentaurs (if not shuttles* with which the devil weaves his hunting-nets and snares); and the resemblance was the greater because, like other ships of war, they were frequently washed, and covered all over with a poisonous case of copper against the outward world, and contained also just such tarred tackle (ribbons). Henry had come with the extremely improbable expectation that Natalie would have examined his friend as eye and ear-witness concerning Rosa's canonical impediments (ecclesiastical prohibitions of marriage); and this disappointment vexed him exceedingly.

Just as Firmian was criticising the Venner's lisping confused manner of speaking, observing that his words seemed to curl about the tip of his tongue without any expression, Henry exclaimed, "Yonder runs the dirt-lily!"**

It was the Venner, like a pike floundering in the net in which he was brought to market. As the wood-pecker (for the natural historian calls every bird with bright plumage a wood-pecker) approached and flew past them, they saw that his face was crimson with

* In German, *weberschiffe*; lit. "weaving-ships."

** The yellow gold—or asphodel root.

anger. Probably, the glue which connected him and Natalie had split asunder.

The two friends lingered yet a little while in the shady paths in the hope of meeting her; but at last they directed their steps towards the town, when they overtook Natalie's maid, who was commissioned to carry the following note to Leibgeber in the city:

"You and your friend, alas! were right; and now all is over. Let me rest, and reflect a short time in *solitude* upon the ruins of my futurity. People with a wounded sown-up lip are not allowed to speak; and it is not my mouth, but my heart, that bleeds for your sex. I also blush because of all the letters I have hitherto written with pleasure, and, alas! under a delusion; and yet I scarcely ought to do so. Have you not yourself said, we should be as little ashamed of innocent joys as of blackberries, although after the enjoyment they leave a black stain on the mouth? But, at any rate, I thank you from my heart.

"As I must one day have been disenchanted, it was exceedingly mild that the spell was not dissolved by the sorcerer himself, but by you and your honest friend, to whom I beg you will offer my kind regards.

Yours,

"A. NATALIE."

Henry had expected a note of invitation at the least, since her empty heart, he said, must feel a cold void, like a finger of which the nail has been too closely cut. But Firmian, who had been schooled by marriage, and had thereby acquired barometer-scales and dial-plates for his observations on women, was wise enough to be of opinion, that in the hour of dismissing a

lover on moral grounds alone, a woman must needs be a little cool towards the man who persuaded her to do so, even though he were a second lover; and for the same reason (this must be added by myself), immediately after her coolness she will exceed in warmth towards him.

"Poor Natalie! may the blossoms and the flowers become the English court-plaster for the wounds in your heart, and the mild ether of spring the milk-cure for your oppressed, panting bosom!" Such was the unceasing wish of Firmian's soul; and he felt it acutely that an innocent being should be tried and punished as severely as a guilty one, and that she had to draw the purifying air of her life from poisonous plants, instead of from healthy ones.*

The following day, all that Siebenkäs did was to write a letter, in which he signed himself Leibgeber, and wherein he informed the Count of Vaduz that he was ill, and looked as greyish-yellow as a Swiss cheese. Henry had left him no peace until he did it.

"The count," said he, "has accustomed himself in my person to the idea of a blooming, fair, glowing inspector; but now, if he is made acquainted with your appearance by letter, he will not be surprised at the reality, and will take you for me. Luckily we are both of us men who have no need to unbutton in any custom-house,** having nothing beneath our waistcoats but the navel.

On Thursday, as Siebenkäs stood at the door of

* Even poisonous plants, as is well known, exhale air that supports life.

** For instance, in Engelhardszoll, the Austrian custom-house officers unbutton every paunch, in order to assure themselves of the fact that it is not cloth.

the hotel, he beheld the Venner in a court-dress, with a laurelled parade-head, and a whole vineyard upon his face, driving between two ladies to "Ermitage." When he carried his news up stairs, Leibgeber swore that "the rogue was not worthy of any body, except one who had a place of skulls instead of a head, and a *gorge de Paris*, or, reversing the direction, a *cul de Paris*, instead of a heart. He was determined to visit Natalie, and inform her of what they had seen this very day; but Firmian positively would not allow him.

On Friday she herself wrote to Henry, as follows:

"I revoke my prohibition, and beg you and your friend to visit the lovely Fantaisie to-morrow, Saturday, when it will be depopulated, rather than on the following Sunday. I hold nature and friendship in my arms, and they cannot contain more. Last night I dreamt that you were both in one coffin, and a white butterfly, hovering above you, grew larger and larger, until his wings became as large as white shrouds, and then he covered you both; and beneath the shroud all was motionless. The day after to-morrow my dear friend arrives; and I hope you will come to-morrow, and then I shall take leave of you all. N. A."

The events of this Saturday occupy the whole of the following chapter; and, from my own eagerness on the subject, I can form some faint idea of what the reader's must be; the more especially as I have already read it, (if not written it,) which he has not.

CHAPTER XIV.

Dismissal of a Lover. Fantaisie. The Child with the Nosegay. The Eden of Night, and the Angel at the Gate of Paradise.

NEITHER the deep blue of the sky, which on Saturday was as dark and pure as in winter or in the night, nor the thought that he should see to-day the sorrowing soul whom he had driven out of her paradise from the Sodom-apple of the serpent (Rosa), nor illness, nor yet pictures of his domestic life,—none of these things alone, but all these semitones and flats combined, composed in our Firmian's mind a melting *maestoso*, which reflected on his looks and imagination as much softness for his afternoon's visit as he expected to find in Natalie's. He found the reverse. In and around Natalie reigned that nobler, cold, peaceful serenity, which has its image on the loftiest mountains. Clouds and storms lie beneath their summits, and around them reposes a thinner, cooler atmosphere, but also a darker blue and a paler sun.

I cannot blame the reader for having some curiosity to hear the account she must give of her rupture with Everard. But it could be written round a Prussian dollar—so short a one did she give—were I not to dilate and complete it by that which I have extracted from Rosa's pen into my own. The fact is, the Vener, five years afterwards, wrote a very good novel (if we are to believe the panegyric in the Universal German Library), in which he artistically interwove the whole

schism between himself and her—the separation of soul and body—so we may conclude, at least, from several hints dropped by Natalie. This, therefore, is my fountain of Vaocluse. A spiritual sheep, like Rosa, cannot produce any thing but what he himself has experienced; and his poetical conceptions are, therefore, nothing but the adopted children of reality.

The following is a short sketch of the event:—

Scarcely had Firmian and Henry disappeared beneath the trees, when the Venner, no longer deferring his revenge, asked Natalie, in an offended tone, how she could permit such poor plebeians to visit her.

Natalie, whose feelings were already kindled by the haste and coldness of the two who had left, allowed her fire to burst out into flames against the silken catechumen. She answered: "Such a question is almost insulting;" and added (for she was too warm and proud to dissemble and act the spy), "you yourself have frequently visited Mr. Siebenkäs."

"Properly speaking, only his wife," said the vain man; "the visit to him was only the pretence."

"Indeed!" said she, and stretched out the syllables as long as her angry look.

Meyern was surprised at this behaviour, which contrasted so forcibly with all their previous correspondence—a circumstance which he attributed to the twin cronies; and, worked up to the greatest courage by his own beauty and wealth, and her poverty and dependence upon Blaise, not to speak of his near right of husband, this bold lion made nothing of doing what no other would have ventured upon, viz. of humbling this angry Venus by letting her become acquainted with his ap-

pointments as *cicisbeo*, and holding up before her the prospect in perspective of a hundred gynasia and widows' seats that would be open to him in the future. He, therefore, coolly said to her:

"It is so easy to worship false goddesses, and to open their church-doors, that I am glad that by your Babylonian captivity I shall be brought back for ever to the true female divinity."

Her wounded heart groaned internally, "All, all is true! He is not virtuous, and I am now so unhappy!" But she was silent, and went to the window. But when the Venner, wishing to make amends for his boasting by a sudden transition to an easy, jesting manner, proposed a walk in the park to her as a better place for a reconciliation (a tone which, even in trifling quarrels with young girls, has more effect in smoothing matters than a more pompous manner), her spirit, which was one belonging to the feminine order of chivalry, and always had a tendency to perform heroic deeds of self-sacrifice, and in which a predilection for premeditated acts of greatness was the only littleness, —her beautiful spirit, I say, now expanded its pure white wings, and flew away for ever from the dirty heart of this crooked silver-scaled pike; and she stepped up to him, and said, colouring, but without a tear:

"Monsieur von Meyern, it is now decided! We are parted for ever. We never knew one another, and I will have no further acquaintance with you. To-morrow we will exchange our letters."

He might have kept possession of this strong mind many days, perhaps weeks, by a more serious manner.

Without taking any further notice of him, she opened a box, and began to sort letters. He said a hundred things to flatter and please her; but she did not even deign him an answer. His inner man foamed with rage, because he laid it all to the charge of the Advocates. At length he endeavoured at once to humble and convert the deaf and dumb one, by observing:

"I don't know what your uncle in Kuhschnappel will say to this. He seems to put a much higher value upon my sentiments towards you than you do: indeed, he considers the connexion with me as necessary for *your* fortune, as I do for mine."

This burden fell too heavily upon one who was already deeply wounded by Destiny. Natalie hastily shut the box, seated herself, and, supporting her dizzy head upon her trembling arms, she shed burning tears, which she in vain endeavoured to conceal with her hand; for the reproach of poverty comes out of the mouth of one who has been loved, like glowing iron entering into the heart and scorching it, as with flames. Rosa, whose satiated revenge gave place to greedy love, and who, in his selfish emotion, hoped that hers too was an emotion of the same nature, caused by their severed bond, threw himself on his knees before her, and exclaimed: "Let all be forgotten! What are we then quarrelling about? Your precious tears extinguish every thing, and I mingle mine with them abundantly."

"Oh," said she, very proudly, and she rose, leaving him on his knees, "I am not weeping at any thing that concerns you. I am poor, and shall remain poor. Sir, after the mean reproach you have made me, you

cannot possibly remain to see me weep, but must go away."

He consequently departed, and indeed, considering his return—load of baskets of all sorts, including mouth-baskets or muzzles, he went tolerably erect, and with sufficient spirit. His serenity, if I may be allowed to praise him, was the more worthy of admiration that he maintained it, and carried it home with him, on an afternoon when, with his two finest and longest levers, he had been unable to move the least thing in Natalie's heart and heart's ears. One of these levers was the old one he had employed with Lenette, of screwing himself in, like a cork-screw, by the spiral and snail line of little approaches, attentions, and allusions; but Natalie was not weak and light enough for such degradation. From the other lever something perhaps might have been expected, but it had still less effect, even though it consisted in exposing all his scars, like an old warrior, in order to regenerate them into wounds; that is to say, he laid bare his suffering heart, wounded and pierced by so many disappointments in love, and which like a pierced dollar, had hung upon many a saint as votive offering; his soul clad itself in all degrees of court-mourning of sorrow, in deep mourning, and half-mourning,—in hopes, like a widow, of shining more enchantingly in its black dress. But the friend of a Leibgeber could only be softened by manly sorrows, while effeminate ones, on the contrary, served but to harden her.

However, he left his bride, Natalie, as I have already signified, without being at all moved by her self-sacrifice, and without being particularly indignant at her refusal of him. "Let her go to the devil!" thought

he, and he could hardly congratulate himself enough on so easily getting rid of the unpleasantness of being obliged to endure and respect such a being, year after year, in a confounded long marriage; but, on the other hand, his spleen was excited beyond measure against Leibgeber, and particularly against Siebenkäs, whom he looked upon as the real divorcer, and he laid the foundation of several stones in the gall-bladder, and of a little bilious yellow in his eyes, all owing to the Advocate, whom he could not sufficiently detest.

We return to the Saturday. Natalie had to thank the strength of her heart for her serenity and coldness, but was also somewhat indebted to the pair of horses, and two flower-wreathed maidens or rose-girls, with whom Rosa had driven to Ermitage. A woman's jealousy is always some days older than a woman's love; and indeed I know no excellence, no weakness, no sin, no virtue, no womanliness, no manliness, in a girl, which would not tend rather to inflame than to weaken her jealousy.

Not only Siebenkäs but even Leibgeber, instead of clothing, as was his wont, his premiums and reproofs in irony, was this afternoon serious and cordial, in order to warm, as it were, with his breath, her naked shivering soul, deprived of its warm feathers. Perhaps, also, he was softened by her flattering obedience. Besides the above reasons, Firmian was affected by these warmer ones; to-morrow the English lady was coming back, who would put a stop to this garden-pleasure; better acquainted also with the wounds of lost love, he felt infinite sympathy with hers, and would willingly have given his heart's blood to compensate her loss; and, thirdly, having grown up in bare, ordinary rooms,

he was influenced by the splendid furnished ones around him,—a sentiment he naturally transferred to their denizen and hermitress.

Just then the maid, who has already appeared before us once in the course of the week, came into the room, with her eyes filled with tears, and stammered out, that she was going to the confessional, asking if she had done any thing to offend her, &c.

“Me!” said Natalie, with her eyes overflowing with love and kindness; “but I can also pardon you in the name of your mistress, the English lady,” and she went out with her and kissed her, like a good genius, unseen. How beautiful and becoming is the act of forgiving, and condescension towards the oppressed, in a soul which previously had manfully and courageously resisted the oppressor!

Leibgeber took a volume of “Tristram Shandy” out of the library of the English lady, and lay down with it under the nearest tree; he wished to make over to his friend the undivided enjoyment of the anise march-pane and honey-comb of such an afternoon of conversation, which for him had already become ordinary food. To-day too, whenever he seemed inclined to jest, Natalie’s eyes looked on him beseechingly, as if to say: “Do it not; do not expose to him my inward scars; spare me this once.” And, lastly,—and this was his chief motive,—it would thus become easier to Firmian to shew in crooked letters behind a treble shroud his proposal to the sensitive Natalie, who was now put upon eighth-pay, to become his laughing heiress, his appanaged widow.

This was for Siebenkäs a labour at the fortifications, a journey over the Alps, a voyage round the

world, or into the cavern of Antiparos, and a discovery of the longitude at sea. He did not even think of preparing the way for it; and he had previously told Leibgeber that if his death were a real one, no one would be more willing to speak to her about it than himself; but he could not possibly sadden her with the mention of a mock death; she must, therefore, agree to the widowhood at a venture, and unconditionally. "And is my death a thing so impossible?" he demanded.

"Yes," had Leibgeber answered, "or where would be our death in jest? and the donna must endure it."

His conduct, it seems, was somewhat harder and colder towards women's hearts than that of Siebenkäs, in whose opinion, as hermit-connoisseur of strong-minded women, such a tender and suffering soul could scarcely be sufficiently indulged; but I will not judge between the two friends.

When Henry had gone out with Yorick, Siebenkäs placed himself before a fresco-painting which represented this same Yorick near the flute-playing Maria and her goat; for the apartments of the great are picture-bibles and an *orbis pictus*. They sit, eat, and walk in pictorial exhibitions; and it is therefore the more unpleasant to them, that two of the widest spaces which are ready grounded, the heavens and the sea, cannot be painted over for them. Natalie had scarcely approached him when she exclaimed, "What is there to be seen in that to-day? Away from it!"

She was just as open and unembarrassed in her manner towards him as he could *not* be towards her. She revealed the beauty of her ardent soul in that by which we unconsciously either unveil or unmask our-

selves most completely, that is, in her manner of praising. The illuminated triumphal arch which she erected over the head of her returning English friend, elevated her own soul, and she stood as conqueror with the laurel-crown and the glittering chain of the order of virtue at the gate of honour. Her praise was the echo and double chorus of the other's worth: she was so earnest and so warm. Oh! a thousand times more lovely do ye appear, maidens, when ye weave bridal and laurel garlands for your companions, than when ye twine and bend for them straw-crowns and iron-collars! She told him of her predilection for English men and women, both in and out of print; although it was only last winter that she saw an Englishman for the first time in her life—"if," added she, smiling, "our friend yonder was not the first."

Leibgeber looked up from his green couch, and he saw them both looking down upon him kindly through the open window, and the radiance of love flowed from six eyes. How sweetly one single second united three sister souls! When the maid returned from confession, in her white glittering garments, which, instead of light butterfly-wings, were thick wing-shells, and on which fluttered a few extra wings of ribbon, he looked at this ornamented penitent a moment, and took up the black and gold hymn-book, which, in her haste, she had put down. He unclasped it, and found inside a whole collection of silk-patterns, and, further on, peacocks' feathers. Natalie, who read in the expression of his face a satirical reflection upon her sex, diverted it by saying, "That your sex esteems ornament as much as ours, is proved by the electoral dresses, the coronation-robcs in Frankfort, and all of-

ficial costumes and uniforms; the peacock, too, is the bird of the ancient knights and poets. If these were permitted to swear by his feathers, or crown themselves with them, we may surely put on a few, and *mark*, if we may not reward, our songs with them."

An unpolite astonishment at her knowledge sometimes escaped the Advocate. He turned over the leaves of the festival hymn-book, and stumbled upon gilded pictures of the Madonna, and upon one picture, in open tracery-work, which consisted of two coloured blots, representing two lovers, together with a third phosphorescent heart, which the male blot offered to the female blot, with the words:—

*"Hast thou my true love yet to learn?
Behold how my poor heart doth burn!"*

Firmian loved family and company miniatures when they were wretched like the present. Natalie saw and read it, and taking the book hastily away, she snapped the clasp, and then first asked him, "You have no objection to it?"

Courage towards women is not innate, but acquired. Firmian had associated with few; therefore his awe caused him to look upon a woman's person, especially that of a noble lady (for it is easy and right to be superior to rank with regard to men, but not to women), as a holy ark of the covenant, which no finger may touch, and every woman's foot as one upon which a Spanish queen stands, and every woman's finger as a Franklin's point from which electric sparks shoot out. If she had been in love with him, I could have compared her to an electrified person, who herself experiences all the mock pains and shocks which she

gives. However, nothing was more natural than that his shyness should diminish with time; and, at last, he even ventured, when she was not looking round, to take the ribbon of her cap boldly between his fingers, without her observing it. As a sort of preparation for such a venturesome deed, might be considered his attempts to take into his hands the things that had often passed through hers—even her English scissors, an unscrewed pincushion, and a pencil-case.

He attempted the same familiarity with a waxen bunch of grapes, which he thought was made of stone, like those on butter-bowls. He therefore squeezed it in his hand as in a wine-press, smashed two or three berries, and then handed in petitions for grace and indulgence, as though he had let fall and broken to pieces the porcelain-tower in Nankin.

She said smiling, "There is nothing lost. Among our joys there are plenty of such berries, which have a beautiful ripe skin, are without any intoxicating juice, and just as easily fall to pieces."

He feared that this sublime many-coloured rainbow of his joy would melt into evening dew, and sink with the outer sun; and he was dismayed by no longer seeing Leibgeber reading upon the blooming turf. The external world became transfigured into a sun-land; every tree was a more solid, richer joy-flower; the valley, like a condensed universe, seemed to echo the deep murmuring music of the spheres. Nevertheless, he had not the courage to offer his arm to this Venus for a walk in the sun, that is, in the sunny Fantaisie. The fate of the Venner, and the gleanings of a few wandering visitors, made him shy and dumb.

Suddenly Henry knocked at the window with the

agate-head of his stick, and called out, "Over the way to supper. The stick's head is the Vienna-lantern,* and we shall not get home to-day before midnight." (He had ordered supper for himself and his friend in the little neighbouring inn.) All at once he added, "There is a pretty child just asking for you."

Siebenkäs hastened out, and the same pretty little girl to whom he had given his flowers, in his enthusiastic flight through the village of Johannes, after the great festive evening in Ermitage, stood before him with a little nosegay, and asked him where his wife was who had taken her, a few days ago, out of the water. "I have a few pretty flowers to give her from my godfather, and my mother will soon come and thank the lady herself; but she is now in bed, and is far too ill."

Natalie, who had heard the conversation from above, came down, and said, blushing, "Dear little one, was it not I? Give me your little nosegay."

The little girl recognised her, kissed her hand, the hem of her garment, then her mouth, and was about to begin the round of kisses over again, when Natalie opened the nosegay, and, amid its living forget-me-not and white and red roses, discovered also artificial ones of silk.

On Natalie's asking, in surprise, where she had got these expensive flowers, the little girl answered, "If you will give me a few kreuzers, I will tell you:" and on obtaining them, continued, "From my godfather;

* We have all read in the newspapers, that at the gala-masquerades at Vienna a paper-lantern is borne aloft, with the inscription, "Supper is on the table." This may therefore be called the Vienna-lantern.

he is a very fine gentleman;" and so saying she ran away among the bushes.

The nosegay was for all of them a real Turkish Selam-flower-riddle. Leibgeber easily explained the child's speedy marriage of Natalie and Siebenkäs by the fact that the Advocate had stood near her at the basin, and stretched out a helping hand; and from their personal resemblance to each other, the people had concluded that no one had been so often walking with her as the Advocate, mistaking him for Leibgeber.

But Siebenkäs thought more about the plotter Rosa, who loved to stitch the patchwork scenes of his life into every woman's affairs; and the resemblance of these artificial flowers to those which the Venner had once redeemed for Lenette in Kuhschnappel was striking; but he would not disturb the glad hour, and the pleasure caused by the votive flower-offering of the preserved child, by mentioning his suspicions. Natalie kindly insisted on dividing the flower-inheritance, as each had done something, and they had at least saved the preserver. The white silk rose she kept for herself, and offered Leibgeber the red one, who, however, declined it, demanding a sensible real one in its stead, which he immediately stuck into his mouth. To the Advocate she gave the silk forget-me-not, and a few living breathing ones beside, the souls, as it were, of the artificial flowers. He received them with rapture, and said the soft living ones would never fade for him. Thereupon Natalie took only a short temporary leave of them; but Firmian could not thank his friend enough for all the means he had adopted to lengthen a period

of grace which encircled his old worn-out life with a new heaven and a new earth.

No king of Spain, although by the laws of the empire a hundred dishes are sent up to his table, can take as little from no more than six, as Firmian took from one. But trustworthy historians inform us that he was willing to drink something, and that was wine, —and hastily too; for he could not be happy enough to-day for his Leibgeber, since the latter, seldom overtaken by feelings on his own account, felt a more inexpressible joy that his dear Firmian had at last got a pole-star and star of happiness and rest, high above him in the heavens, which now beamed, with a genial warmth, upon the blossoming season of his thinly-sown flowers.

By the rapidity of his double enjoyment he got the start of the sun, and returned to the rose-tinted château, the windows of which the glorious evening gilded with fire. Natalie stood without on the balcony, like an illumined soul about to fly after the sun; and her large eyes were fixed on the bright trembling world-rotunda, full of church-music, and on the sun, which, like an angel, had flown down from the temple, and on the beaming, holy sepulchre of the night, into which the earth was about to sink.

While they were yet beneath the balcony to which Natalie beckoned them to come up, Henry gave his stick to his friend: "Keep it for me; I have other things to carry; if you want me, whistle." The good Henry, beneath a physically shaggy bear's breast, had morally the most beautiful human heart.

Happy Firmian! notwithstanding your afflictions. When you now step through the glass-door upon the

iron-floor, the sun sets over again, and the earth closes her large eye, like that of a dying goddess! Then the mountains smoke about you like altars; the choruses burst from the woods; shadows, the veils of day, flutter around the kindled transparent tree-tops, and lie upon the variegated brooches of flowers; and the bright gold of the evening-red casts a dead golden hue upon the east, and falls with rosy colours on the floating bosom of the trembling lark, the high-hung evening-bell of Nature! Happy man! when a glorious spirit flies from afar over the earth and its spring, and beneath him a thousand lovely evenings are concentrated into one burning one,—that evening is yet not more elysian than the one which now glows around you.

When the flames upon the windows grew pale, and the moon was still rising heavily from behind the earth, they both went, silent and with full hearts, into the twilight apartment. Firmian opened the pianoforte, and repeated his evening in tones, the trembling chords becoming the fiery tongues of his oppressed bosom. The flower-ashes of his youth were blown away, and beneath them a few young minutes bloomed again. But when the tones poured the warm balsam of life over Natalie's restrained, swollen heart, whose wounds were only closed not healed, it seemed to melt gently away; and all the heavy tears which had burned within flowed out of it without measure, and it became weak but light. Firmian, who perceived that she was again passing through the gate of sacrifice to the knife, put an end to the sacrificial music, and sought to lead her away from this altar. Suddenly the first beam of the moon spread itself, like a swan's wing, upon the waxen bunch of grapes. He begged her to come out into the

still, misty after-summer of the day—the moon-evening. She gave him her arm without saying “yes.”

What a sparkling world! Through branches and through fountains, over mountains and over woods, flowed flashing the molten veins of silver, which the moon had separated from the dross of night. Her silver glance glided over the broken wave and the trembling smooth apple-leaf, and closely embraced the white marble pillars and the shining birch-tree stems. They stood still before they entered the magic valley, as into an enchanted cavern playing with Night and Light, into which all the fountains of life, which, in the day-time, had thrown up sweet odours, and voices, and songs, and transparent and feathery wings, had now again fallen back, and filled a deep silent gulf.

They turned towards the Sophia-mountain, whose summit was flattened by the weight of time, and on which, instead of the Alpine peak, arose the Colossus of Fog; they glanced over the pale green world, slumbering beneath the more distant and tranquil suns, and looked on the silver dust of stars, which flew far away into the furthest depths before the up-rolling moon, and then they looked at one another, filled with pious friendship, as only two innocent glad angels, on their first creation, can look for joy; and Firmian said, “Are you as happy as I?”

Involuntarily pressing, not his hand but his arm, she answered, “No, I am not; for upon such a night there should follow no day, but something much more beautiful, something richer, which satisfies the thirsty heart, and stops the bleeding one.”

“And what is that?” he asked.

“Death,” said she, gently. She lifted up her

streaming eyes to him, and repeated, "Noble friend, is it not so? for me, death?"

"No," said Firmian; "rather for me."

To interrupt the course of this overpowering moment, she added quickly, "Shall we go down to the spot where we met for the first time, and where, two days too soon, I became your friend?—and yet it was not too soon; shall we?"

He obeyed her; but his soul was still dwelling on the former thought; and while they were going down a long sloping gravel-walk, sprinkled over by the shadows of the shrubbery, down whose white bed, broken by shadows as by stones, the moonlight rippled, he said, "Yes, in an hour like this, when death and heaven send their brothers,* a soul such as yours may think of death; but I have yet more reason, for I am more joyful. Oh, Joy, most of all, loves to see Death at her festive board; for he is himself a joy, and the last rapture of earth. Only the vulgar can confound the heavenward soaring flight of humanity into the far land of the spring with the mock funereal phenomena on the earth; in the same manner as they take the hooting of the owls, on their departure for warmer climes, for the rattling of ghosts: and yet, good Natalie, in your case, I cannot bear to think of what you have said. No! a soul so rich must unfold its blossoms in an earlier spring than that beyond this life—O God, it must!"

They reached a wall of rock, clothed by the broad waterfall of the moonlight, against which was a trellis of roses. Natalie broke off a green soft thorny twig, with two little rose-buds just beginning to swell, and

* Death sends *sleep*, and heaven the *dream*.

saying, "You will never open," she put them into her bosom; then looking at him with a strange expression, she added, "While they are quite young they prick but little."

Arrived below, at the stone water-basin, the holy spot of their first meeting, as they were both seeking words wherewith to express the feelings of their hearts, they beheld some one ascend from the dry basin. With a smile of emotion they recognised their Leibgeber, who had hidden himself here, among the imaged water-gods, with a bottle of wine, and lay in wait for their coming. There had been something in his troubled eye which had flowed out of it, as a libation from our cup of joy, for this spring-night.

"This place, and haven of your first landing," said he, "must be properly consecrated; you, too (to Natalie), must join in the pledge. By heaven! there is more costly fruit hanging to-day within reach, from its blue dome, than from any green one."

They each took a glass, pledged one another, and said,—some among them, I fancy, in a stifled voice,—
"Long live friendship! May the spot be ever green where it commenced! May every place bloom where it grew! and when all its bloom is over, and its leaves withered and fallen, may friendship still continue!"

Natalie was obliged to turn away her eyes. Henry laid his hand upon his agate stick-head, but only that he might press warmly and heartily the hand of his friend, which rested upon it, for Firmian still had it; and he said: "Give it to me! you shall have no clouds in your hand to-day;" for Nature, in her subterranean workshop, had engraven cloudy streaks upon the agate. This bashful concealment of the warm token of friend-

ship would have touched every heart, not Natalie's tender one alone.

"You will stay with us," said she, faintly, as he was about to go away.

"I am going to the landlord," he answered; "and if I can find a flute or bugle-horn, I shall come out, and usher in the spring by wafting music over the valley."

When he disappeared, it seemed to his friend as if his youth were gone. All at once, high above the giddy May-chafers, and breeze-borne night-butterflies, and their arrow-swift hunters the bats, he beheld a broad flight of birds of passage, winging back to our spring, and looking like a fleecy cloud. Hereupon the recollections of his room in the market-town, his evening journal, and the hour when, after a similar appearance of earlier birds of passage, he had closed it with the conviction that he would soon cease to live,—these recollections rushed with all their tears into his open heart, and again inspired him with the expectation of death; and this idea he desired to communicate to his friend. The broad night lay stretched out before him, like a great corpse upon the world; but her shadowy limbs quivered among the moonlit branches in the breath of the morning, and she rises up before the sun as a consuming vapour—as an all-embracing cloud—and man says, "It is day!"

In Firmian's soul two crape-covered thoughts struggled together, like images of terror. The one said, he would die of apoplexy, and would see her no more; the other, that he was about to simulate death, and then that he dare not see her again.

Oppressed by the past and the present, he took

Natalie's hand, and said: "You may pardon me to-day the deepest emotion. I shall never see you again. You are the noblest of your sex that I ever met; but we shall never meet again. You will soon hear that I am dead, or that my name has disappeared, in whatever manner it may be; but my heart is yours—is *thine*. . . . Oh, that the present, with its mountain-chain of tombs, were behind me! and that the future, with all its open graves, now lay before me; and I were standing to-day beside the last cavern; I would then look at you once more, and cast myself down in bliss!"

Natalie answered not a word. All at once she faltered in her walk, her arm trembled, her breathing became oppressed. She stopped, and said, in a trembling voice, her face quite pale: "Stay on this spot; leave me for a moment alone on yonder turf-seat. Ah, I am so hasty!"

He saw her tremble as she moved away, and then sink, as if overcome by a great weight, upon a turf-bank, in the moonlight. She fixed her blinded eyes on the moon, around which the blue heavens became a night, and the earth a vapour; her arms lay rigid on her lap, but an expression of pain played about her lips like a smile, and in her eye there was no tear. But life now seemed spread out before her friend like an indistinct dissolving kingdom of shadows, full of hollow, sunken mine-shafts,—full of mists, like spirits of the mountains,—and with one sole opening, and that so narrow and so distant, to let him forth into the light, into the heavens, the free air, the spring, and into the bright day. His friend was reposing in the white crystal radiance, like an angel on the grave of an infant. . . .

Suddenly the tones of Henry's music burst upon them, like church-bells during a storm; and the two stunned souls were agitated as by an impending tempest, and their hearts were carried away and dissolved in the warm stream of melody. Natalie now nodded her head, as if she had confirmed a resolution: she arose and stepped forth, like a transfigured being, from the green flower-grown grave; and, stretching out her arms, she walked towards him. Tears chased each other down her blushing face; but her heart was yet speechless. Sinking under the great world in her soul, she could totter no further; and he flew to meet her. Weeping more vioiently, she held him away from her, that she might first speak; but after the words, "First and last friend—for the first and last time!" she became breathless and mute, and, overburdened with sorrow, sunk into his arms, on his lips, on his bosom.

"No, no!" she stammered out. "O God! give me but words to speak. Firmian, my Firmian, take all my joy—all my earthly joys—all I have; but never, I adjure thee, by all that is most sacred,—never look upon me again upon this earth;" and she added, gently, "*swear that to me now!*"

She lifted up her head; and the tones passed like speaking sorrows between the two; and she looked at him fixedly; and the pale, care-worn face of her friend agonised her wounded heart; and she repeated the request, with an eye expressive of anguish, "Only swear!"

"Thou noble, glorious soul!" answered he, in a trembling voice, "Yes, I swear to thee, I will see thee no more!"

Mute and motionless, as if struck by death, she fell

upon his bosom with drooping head; and once again he said, as if dying, "I will see thee no more!"

Then, beaming like an angel, she raised her countenance, pale from exhaustion, to his, and said: "It is now past; receive the death-kiss, and say not another word."

He did so; and she disengaged herself gently from his arms. But as she turned away, she gave him the green rose-bud with its soft thorns, and said: "Think of to-day!" She walked away, resolved, but trembling; and was soon lost in the dark green alleys, which were traversed but by few beams of light, and did not again turn round.

And the end of this night every soul who has loved will picture to himself, without the help of my words.

CHAPTER XV.

Rosa von Meyern. After-Tones and After-Pains of the Loveliest Night. Letters of Natalie and Firmian. Leibgeber's Table-Talk

IF in a moist, warm, starry spring night, the broad roof of earth were to be removed from above the heads of the workmen in a salt-mine, and they were thus to be suddenly transported from their subterranean stillness into the dark, expanded dormitory of Nature, among the breezes, and odours, and sounds of spring, they would be in a position similar to that of Firmian, whose hitherto reserved, tranquil, serene spirit the preceding night had all at once violently riven, and darkened by new sorrows, new joys, and a new world. Henry maintained a very speaking silence on the subject of this night; but Firmian, on the contrary, betrayed himself by a silent hunting after conversation. Let him fold, as he would, the wings which had yesterday, for the first time, expanded themselves moist out of the chrysalis-case, they yet were longer than their wing-shells. At last it grew tiresome and sultry to Leibgeber. Yesterday, already, they had gone to Baireuth and to bed in silence, and it fatigued him to think of all the half-tints and half-tones which had first to be laid on before four bold, broad strokes could be made on the picture of the night. There is, perhaps, nothing more to be lamented than that we have not all, at one and the same time, the whooping-cough, or Werther's sorrows, or twenty-one years or sixty-one years of age, or

hypochondriacal attacks, or honeymoons, or mock-plays; for how clearly we should then see our own condition reflected in that of others, and bear it as choristers of the same joy, or sorrow, or cough-tutti, and pardon in another every thing wherein he resembled ourselves. Now, on the contrary, when one coughs to-day, another to-morrow (always excepting the simultaneous social coughing after the chancel-hymn in the Swiss churches), when one takes his dancing lesson, whilst another is kneeling at conventicles,—when the little girl of one father is hanging over the baptismal font, whilst at the same minute the boy of another is suspended by ropes above the small grave,—now, when Destiny, to the key-note of our own hearts, strikes chords of a different key in the hearts of those around us, or at least extreme sixths, major sevenths, minor seconds,—in this general absence of unison and harmony, nothing better is to be expected than a screeching cat-*charivari*, and nothing to be hoped for but a little *arpeggio*, if not melody.

In order to get a handle for talk, or by way of a pump-handle to force three drops out of his heart, Leibgeber seized Firmian's hand, and pressed it with all its fingers gently and warmly. He asked him indifferent questions concerning their walks and excursions for the day; but he had not foreseen that the pressure of the hand would but involve him in deeper embarrassment, since it might now be fairly exacted of him that he should humour the hand as well as the tongue; for he could not cast off the hand of another all at once, but was obliged to let it fall by a gradual *diminuendo* of pressure. To pay so much attention to feelings made him blush with shame, and quite maddened him, nay,

he would have thrown my description into the fire. I have been told that he could not utter the word "heart" even in the society of women, who have it always on their tongues, like an ascending *globulus hystericus*. "It is," he said, "the spout and bullet-drawer of their hearts itself; it is the ball on the fencing foil of their fans; and for me it is a ball of poison, a ball of pitch for the Bel at Babel."

His hand all at once escaped from the dear personal arrest. Taking up his hat and stick, he exclaimed, "I see you are as stupid as I am. Instanter—instantius—instantissime. In three words, have you told her about the widow's pension or not? Yes, or no; I am going out directly."

Siebenkäs more rapidly still poured out all his information at once. "She will certainly have it. I neither have said, nor can say any thing to her. You can say it easily, and must. I shall go no more to Fantaisie. In the afternoon, Henry, we will thoroughly enjoy ourselves. The music of our life shall be a sounding one. On our harps are yet all the loud pedals for tones of joy, and we have but to tread on them."

Henry recovered himself, and said as he went away, "In the human instrument the Cremona strings are twisted out of living entrails, and the breast is only the sounding-board, and the head nothing but the damper-pedal."

The solitude lay around our friend like a beautiful country. All the wandering echoes could reach him from afar; and upon the tissue, woven in twelve hours, which was spread before the loveliest historical picture of his life, he could tremblingly make a chalk copy of the picture, and copy it again and again a thousand

times. But he dared not venture to revisit the beautiful, increasingly blooming Fantaisie, lest he should be the means of excluding Natalie from this valley of flowers by a *living* hedge. He had to pay for his enjoyment by self-denial.

The charms of the town and of its environs preserved their bright-coloured shell, and lost their sweet kernel. Every thing to him was like a piece of confectionary, the ground of which, in former days, used to be strewn over with powdered sugar of different hues, but is now only grounded with coloured sand, more fitted for inlaying than for eating. All his hopes, all the blossoms and fruit of his life, now grew and ripened beneath the earth, like our higher ones, and those of the subterranean chick-pea.* I mean, in the mock grave, into which he was about to descend. How little did he possess, and yet how much! His foot rested upon withered prickly rose-trees; around the elysian fields of his futurity, his eye beheld thorny bushes, brambles, and a rampart formed by his own grave. The whole of his Leipzig valley of roses was reduced to the little green rose-tree, which, with its unopened blossoms, had been transplanted from Natalie's heart into his own. And yet how much he possessed! He had received from Natalie a "forget-me-not" for the whole of his life,—the silken ones she had given him were but the bark of the eternally blooming ones,—a spring-time of the soul, which, after so many springs, he at length enjoyed; to be so loved, namely, by a woman, for the first time in his life, as dreams

* The chick-pea, *Platt-erbse*, has indeed some blossoms and fruit above the earth, but the most of them beneath it, though white ones.—Linnaeus's *Treatise on the Inhabited Earth*.

and poets had a hundred times pictured to him in the lot of others. Suddenly to step forth from the old paper lumber-chamber of deeds and books into the fresh green flower-spangled world of love; for the first time, not only to be the object of such love, but to carry away with him such a parting kiss, like a sun, to brighten and warm his whole future life—this was bliss to one who had borne the cross in the past! Besides, he was quite at liberty to abandon himself to the beautiful waves of this river of paradise, and allow himself to be carried by them whithersoever they pleased, since he could never possess his Natalie, nor even see her again. In Lenette he had loved no Natalie, as in the latter no Lenette. His matrimonial love was a prose summer-day of harvest and of sultriness, and the present was a poetical spring-night, full of blossoms and stars, and his new world resembled the name of the place of its creation, Fantaisie. He did not conceal from himself (since he had resolved to die before Natalie) that in her he loved only a departed spirit, as a departed spirit himself; or rather, in his living character, he loved her as a transfigured being, who for him was gone for ever; and he asked himself openly the question, whether he might not love this Natalie, who now belonged to the past, as well and as warmly as any others who had long ago flown away into a still more distant past,—the Heloise of an Abelard, or St. Preux, for instance, or a poet's Laura, or Werther's Lotte, for whom he did not even die in so serious a sense as Werther.

All he could say to his friend Leibgeber, after his best endeavours, was this: "You must have been very much loved by her—by this rare being; for I can only

ascribe her great goodness to me to my resemblance to you; for in all other respects I am so unlike any one, and I was never favoured by women."

Leibgeber, and he himself immediately afterwards, smiled at the almost silly remark; but what lover, during his month of May, is not a real good living sheep?

Leibgeber soon returned to the hotel with the news that he had seen the English lady drive to Fantaisie. Firmian was very glad of it, as it made it easier for him to keep his resolution of excluding himself from the whole district of pleasure; for she was the daughter of the Count of Vaduz, and therefore the Advocate of the Poor must not now be seen by her, as he was to pass afterwards for Leibgeber.

But Henry botanised at all hours of the day on the flowery slopes of Fantaisie, less with the view of finding flowers with his botanical scrutinising glasses (his eyes), than to find and question the flower-goddess; but there was no appearance of a divinity. Alas! the afflicted Natalie had so many reasons for absenting herself from the ruins of her most beautiful hours, and shunning the place of a burnt-out fire, overgrown though it was with flowers, where she might be met by one whom she had resolved never to see again.

Some days afterwards, the Venner Rosa von Meyern honoured the company at the table of the Sun with his presence. If the author's calculation of time does not quite deceive him, he himself dined there on the same day; but I have only a dim recollection of the two Advocates, and none at all of the Venner, because holy-day hares of his species are every-day cattle, and entire

game-preserves and menageries full of them are at all times to be had. I have more than once stumbled upon the living originals of persons whom I have afterwards modelled from head to foot, and carried about with me in my biographical cabinet of wax-figures; but I wish I could always know beforehand which of the persons in whose company I happened to be driving or dining, I should afterwards have to copy, as it would enhance the beauty of my biographical manufacture. I candidly confess, I should then be able to collect and store up in my portfolio a thousand little personalities; but, as it is, in the absence of all documents, I am sometimes obliged to invent the less important particulars, as, for instance, whether an event took place at six or seven o'clock. It is, therefore, morally certain that if, on the same morning, three other authors had sat down with myself to give the married life of Siebenkäs to the world from the same historical sources, with all our love of truth, we four should have produced four as different family histories as those handed down to us by the four evangelists; so that our tetrachord could only be brought to agree by a harmony of the four evangelists, as by a tuning-key.

As I have already said, Meyern dined at the Sun. He told the Advocate of the Poor, in a tone of triumph, which had somewhat the appearance of a threat, that he was going back to-morrow to the imperial market-town. The vanity he displayed was greater than ever. He had probably promised his hand in marriage to fifty ladies of Baireuth, as if he were the giant Briareus, with fifty ring-fingers on his hundred hands. He was as greedy of young girls as cats are of *marum-verum*; wherefore both the flowers and the herb have to be

protected by their possessors with a wire-grating. When such poachers, who are always hunting and coursing, are chained alive by clergymen, with thick marriage-rings, to some wild animal that runs with them through every thicket, until they bleed to death, benevolent weekly papers affirm that the punishment is too severe. Undoubtedly it is for the innocent—wild animal.

The next day Rosa really sent to inquire if the Advocate had any message to send to his wife, as he was about to go to her.

Natalie remained invisible. All that Firmian saw of her was a letter to her address, which was shaken out of the post-bag on one of his daily visits to the post-office, to ask if there was a letter from his wife. Lenette would probably not require more hours to write a letter than Isocrates demanded years to compose his panegyric of the Athenians—not more, I say, but exactly ten. The letter to Natalie, as the handwriting and seal betrayed, was from the (step-)father of his country, von Blaise.

"Thou good girl," thought Firmian, "how he will pass the stinging focus of the burning-glass, cut from the ice of his heart, slowly over every wound of thy soul! How many hidden tears thou wilt shed, which no one will mark! and thou hast no hand to dry them and cover them but thine own!"

One blue afternoon he proceeded alone to the only pleasure-garden which was not barred against him, to 'Ermitage.' He was every where met by recollections, but by sadly sweet ones only; every where he had lost or resigned life and heart, and, in accordance with its name, had made himself the hermit of the Hermitage.

Could he ever forget the great dark spot, where, in presence of his kneeling friend and the setting sun, he had sworn to die, and to separate himself for ever from the world of his wife and his acquaintances?

He left the pleasure-grounds, his face directed towards the setting sun, which, with its almost horizontal beams, closed in the prospect, and he now passed far beyond the town in an arch, ever more towards the west, and the road to Fantaisie. His heart was touched as he gazed after the mildly flaming star that, crumbling into glowing cloud-embers, seemed to be falling down into yonder distance, where his orphaned Lenette stood with her face suffused with evening red in the silent chamber.

"Ah, good Lenette," exclaimed a voice within him, "why can I not now, in this Eden, fold thee in bliss to this full, softened bosom? Ah, here I could forgive thee easier, here I could love thee better!" O Nature! so good, so full of infinite love, it is Thou who changest the distance of our bodies into a propinquity of soul! When we are full of exceeding joy in distant places, it is Thou who dost cause the dear images of all those whom we were obliged to forsake, to pass before us like sweet tones and bygone years of happiness; and we stretch out our arms towards the clouds that float above the mountains, behind which our dearest ones dwell. So doth the parted heart open to the distant one, as flowers which open to the sun still unfold their blossoms even on the days when clouds come between them.

The radiance faded! Only the bleeding traces of the fallen sun lingered in the blue. The earth and its

gardens now shewed in greater relief; and Firmian all at once beheld close to him the green Tempe valley of Fantaisie, overspread with the rouge of red clouds and the paint of white blossoms, trembling and rising like vapour before him. But an angel from heaven stood before it, with the sword of a flashing streak of cloud, and said, "Enter not here. Knowest thou the Paradise whence thou hast been cast out?"

Firmian turned back, leaned in the twilight against the lime-wall of the first Baireuth house, to clear away all signs of weeping from his eyes, that he might not appear before his friend with any mark which might require explanation. Leibgeber, however, was not at home; but he found something unexpected—a note from Natalie to his friend. Ye who feel or regret that there is ever and eternally a Moses-veil, and altar-railing, a prison-grating, composed of body and earth, between soul and soul, ye cannot condemn our poor lonesome friend, that, in his emotion, he pressed the cold leaf to his burning lips, to his trembling heart. Verily, to the soul every body, even the human body itself, is but the sacred symbol of an invisible spirit; and not only the letter you kiss, but also the hand that wrote it, like the mouth, whose kiss deceives you with the nearness of a union, is nothing but the visible holy emblem of a lofty beloved being, and the delusions are only distinguishable by their sweetness.

Leibgeber arrived, tore open the note, and read aloud:—

"To-morrow at five o'clock your beautiful town will be behind me. I am going to Schraplau. I should not, my dear friend, have left this sweet valley, without

once again offering you, in person, the assurance of my lasting friendship, and expressing my thanks and wish for yours. I would gladly have taken leave of you in a more living manner than this; but the long parting from my English friend is not yet over, and I have now to resist her wishes, as I had formerly to contend against my own, in order to go and bury myself in my homely solitude, or rather flee thither. The beautiful spring has brought me both joy and sorrow; yet my heart, like Cranmer's, if I may be allowed so bold a comparison, remains alone unconsumed amid the ashes of the funereal pile, unchanged for my beloved ones.

"May you be happy! happier than I, a woman, ever can be. Destiny cannot take much away from you; no, nor even give you much: for you, bright eternal rainbows rest on every waterfall; but it is long ere the rain-clouds of the female heart, and not until they have shed many drops, become tinged with the melancholy serene bow wherewith memory illumines them. Your friend, no doubt, is still with you. Press him warmly to your heart, and tell him that all that yours desires for him, and gives him, mine wishes for him too, and never will he, or his dear friend, be forgotten by me. Ever your

"NATALIE."

During the reading of this letter, Firmian leaned against the window-sill, and turned his face, overflowing with tears, towards the evening sky. With the delicacy of friendship Henry anticipated his reply, and said, looking at him:

"Yes, this Natalie is good, and a thousand times

better than a thousand others; but I will be broken on the wheels of her own carriage, if I don't lie in wait for her to-morrow, at four o'clock, and plant myself close beside her. Verily, I must win and fill her ears, or mine are longer than an elephant's, who uses them as fly-flaps."

"Do so, dear Henry," said Firmian, in the most cheerful voice that could come from his compressed throat; "I will give you three lines to console myself a little for not seeing her again."

There is a lyric intoxication of the heart in which one should write no letters, because fifty years afterwards people may happen to stumble upon them, who have neither heart nor intoxication. Firmian wrote nevertheless, and did not seal, and Leibgeber did not read.

"I also say to you 'Farewell!' but I cannot say, 'Forget-me-not!' Oh, forget me! Leave to me alone the forget-me-not you have given me. The heaven is past, but not the dying! Mine is soon to come, and on this account only, I, and more earnestly still, my Leibgeber, have a request to make you; but so strange a one! Natalie, refuse it not. Your soul is far superior to those female souls who are terrified and confounded by every thing that is singular. *You* may venture! you can never risk your great heart and your happiness. So then, the other evening, I spoke to you for the last time, and to-day I have written for the last time. But Eternity remains for me, and for thee!

"F. S."

He slept dreamingly the whole night, that he might

be Leibgeber's awakener. But at three o'clock in the morning the latter already stood, in his character of postman and *maître des requêtes*, beneath a giant lime-tree, whose hammocks, filled with a sleeping world, were suspended over the avenue through which Natalie had to pass. Firmian, in his bed, acted over Henry's part of waiting, and kept saying to himself:

"Now she will be taking leave of the English lady, —now getting into the carriage,—now she will drive past the tree, and he will arrest her progress." He went on fancying, until he fell asleep, and dreamt, and his dreams oppressed him by a painful confusion, and a repeated refusal of his request. To how many days of gloom both in the physical and moral weather, does not one single starlit night give birth! At last, he dreamt: that she stretched forth her hand to him out of the rolling carriage, with tearful eyes, and with the green rose-bud on her bosom, and said, gently:

"I tell you no! Should I then live long, if you were dead?"

She pressed his hand so strongly that he awoke; but the pressure continued, and the bright day and his bright friend were before him, who said: "She said 'Yes,' but you have slept soundly."

He said, he had almost missed her by a hair's-breadth. She had been quicker with her dressing and departure than others with their undressing and arrival. A dewy rose-twigg, whose leaves pricked more than its thorns, was in her bosom, and the long parting had reddened her eyes. She received him affectionately and kindly, though she was agitated, and eager to hear what he had to say. He first gave her Firmian's open letter,

as his authority. Her burning eye glowed once more with two great drops, and she asked:

"What is it, then, I am to do?"

"Nothing," said Leibgeber artfully, in a tone between jest and earnest. "After his death, you will have nothing to do, but to endure to be reminded of it every year by the Prussian Widow's Provident Fund Institution, as if you were his widow."

"No," she answered, dwelling upon the word in such a manner as requires a comma after it, not a full stop.

He repeated his entreaty, and the reasons for it, and added: "Do it, if only for my sake. I cannot bear that he should be disappointed of a hope, or a wish. As it is, he is like a dancing bear, who is forced by the bear-driver, the state, to go on dancing in winter, without winter's sleep. I, on the contrary, seldom take my paws out of my mouth, and am continually sucking them. He watched the whole night in order to awake me, and is now at home counting every minute."

She read the letter over again, syllable by syllable. He did not insist upon any decision, but spun another subject of conversation,—about the morning, the journey, and Schraplau. The morning had already raised its pillars of fire behind Baireuth. The town was at hand, with its more numerous columns of smoke; and in a few minutes he would be obliged to get out of the carriage.

"Farewell," said he, in the gentlest tone, with one foot on the step of the carriage; "may your future be like the day around us, and become ever brighter.

And now, what last word will you give me to carry to my *good, dear, beloved* Firmian?" (I shall afterwards make an observation.)

She drew down her travelling veil, like the curtain of a concluded stage-life, and said from beneath it, in an inarticulate tone: "If I must, I must; let it be—this too! but you give me an additional sorrow to take with me, on my way."

Here, however, he jumped down, and the carriage rolled on with the much-impoorished Natalie over the ruins of her days.

If he had got a "no" in lieu of the forced "yes," he would have overtaken her again on the other side of the town, and again have got in as a chance passenger.

I promised above to make an observation—it is this:—that the friendship or love a maiden feels for a young man grows perceptibly to the eye when nourished by the friendship she observes to exist between him and his friends; and, polypus-like, it changes the latter into its own substance. Therefore Leibgeber had instinctively manifested his own feelings in a warmer manner than usual. To us men as lovers, on the contrary, such an electric charging or magnetic arming of our love, by the friendship we perceive between our beloved and her female friend, is seldom granted, however much our flame might be increased by the observation. All that falls to our share is, to see our beloved becoming, on our account, hard and frozen towards every other human creature, and presenting them with nothing but cups of ice and cold pudding, in order to brew the stronger love-potion for

ourselves. But this method of giving the heart, like wine, more spirit, strength, and fire, by letting it freeze round the boiling-point, may please a blind, selfish character, but never a bright, benevolent one. At least, the author of the present history confesses, that whenever he has beheld in a mirror, or in water, the reflection of the reversed face of the Janus-head distorted by hatred towards the whole world, while the face before him was melting in love, he himself has immediately made a few such hostile grimaces—to the Janus-head. A maiden should neither talk scandal, nor scold, nor hate, so long, at least, as she is in love, on account of the contrast. When she has become mother of a household, with children, cows, and maid-servants, no reasonable husband can object to a moderate degree of anger and a humble share of scolding.

Natalie had agreed to the strange proposition for many reasons: firstly, just because it was strange; secondly, because the word "widow" seemed to her enthusiastic heart to weave a mourning-band betwixt her and Firmian, which coiled charmingly and fantastically about the scene and the oath on that night-separation; thirdly, because to-day she had risen from one strong emotion to another, and now felt giddy on the height; fourthly, because she was boundlessly unselfish, and consequently troubled herself little about the possible appearance of selfishness; and lastly, because in general she concerned herself as little about appearance and the opinion of the world as a maiden well dare.

On obtaining all his objects, Leibgeber sent out a long, joyful, zodiacal light; and Siebenkäs did not

cast his mourning shade of night across it, but only middle tints. However, he now found it quite impossible to visit the two pleasure-gardens of Baireuth—Ermitage and Fantaisie—which for him had become Herculaneum and Portici; besides, he would be obliged to pass through the latter on his homeward journey, and exhume many things that were buried there. He did not intend to delay his departure long; for not only had the Luna set, which from her sky had shed a fresh silver glow upon all the white flowers and blossoms of spring, but his Leibgeber also was his *memento mori*—death's-head—which was for ever repeating, in a manner not to be misunderstood, though without tongue and lips, "Remember that thou must die (a mock death) at Kuhschnappel."

Leibgeber's heart was on fire to get away into the far distance; and the flames of his forest-conflagration longed to dart and play about, free and unbridled, on the Alps, in islands, and in royal cities.

The deluge of deeds at Vaduz, this paper state-bed and child-bed—*lit de justice*—would have become for him a heavy, gloomy sick-bed, on which the people formerly smothered hydrophobia patients out of compassion. It is true that a small town could as little endure him as he it; but still less could it understand him: were there not, even in the large town of Baireuth, many law-officers dining at the Sun (I have my information from their own lips), who considered his table-talk in the twelfth chapter, concerning the difficulty experienced by crowned heads in the palinogenesis of hereditary princes, as a formal satire on a certain living margrave; whereas, in fact, he never ridiculed any individual, but only mankind *en masse*?

To be sure, he conducted himself with great levity in the open market-place, during the miserable eight days he passed in our town of Hof in Voigtland! Credible Variskers (so the old Voigtlanders were called in Cæsar's time, or, according to others, Nariskers) have informed me, that in the very neighbourhood of the senate-house, and in his best clothes, he publicly bought bergamotte pears, and bread in a baker's shop near at hand; and there still exist certain female Nariskers, who, having watched him, are ready to affirm that he consumed the above-mentioned sacrifice of food out of doors like a prince, and while he was walking, like a Roman army, notwithstanding that stall-feeding is now generally recommended. Others, who have danced with him, can attest that he attended masked balls in his dressing-gown and nightcap, and that he had worn them both in earnest all the day long, before he kept them on in jest for the evening. An intelligent Narisker, who was gifted with a good memory, not knowing that I had the fellow under my historical hands, quoted the following free speeches of Leibgeber:—

“Every man is a born pedant. Few after death, but almost all men before death, hang in cursed chains; therefore, in most countries a freeman means only a gaoler or a hangman.—Folly, as such, was serious; therefore a man committed the least when he was in jest. In his opinion, the creative spirit which brooded on the ink of colleges was what many fathers of the Church considered the spirit to be which, according to Moses, brooded on the waters—wind. Venerable councils, conferences, deputations, sessions, processions, &c., appeared to him not totally devoid

of comic salt, he said, when viewed as serious parodies of a pompous, empty gravity; the more especially as in general only one among the company (or his wife) really reported, voted, decided, governed, while the mystic *corpus* itself was merely appended to the green sessions-table as a mock image, for the joke of the thing; even as the flute-player is screwed upon flute-clocks: his fingers, indeed, move up and down the short flu c which grows out of his mouth, so that children are out of their wits with astonishment at the talent of the wooden toy; while every clockmaker very well knows that there is a cylinder inside which plays hidden flutes with its hidden pins."

"Such language," answered I, "betrays a very bold, perhaps ironical, character."

It were much to be desired that every one in this resembled the author, who can here challenge all the Nariskers to bring forward a single act or word against him which could be termed satirical, or not exactly modelled according to the hat or cap-block of a *pays coutumier*. He begs to be contradicted if he utters an untruth.

A note was the shovel which, on the following day, cast the Advocate of the Poor out of Baireuth; that is, a letter from the Count de Vaduz, expressive of friendly regret on account of Leibgeber's ague and tallowy looks, and, at the same time requesting him to enter earlier on the government of his bailiwick. This little leaf attached itself to Siebenkäs as a wing, to hasten him towards his mock cocoon-grave, in order that he might fly out of it a new-born inspector. He turns back, and quits the beautiful town in the next chapter. In the present he is occupied in taking

private lessons of Leibgeber—whose part henceforth is to devolve upon him—in the art of cutting profiles. The master-tailor and Mentor of the scissors did nothing in this matter which deserves to be handed down by me to posterity, excepting one thing, which I heard from the mouth of Mr. Feldmann, the inn-keeper, who was carving at the table at the time it occurred; but I cannot find a word about it in my own documents. It was nothing more than that a stranger who was at the table, among the profiles of many of the guests, also cut out that of the *silhouette improvisatore*, Leibgeber. The latter observing it, on his side secretly cut out, underneath the tablecloth, the supernumerary face-copier; and when the stranger offered the one portrait, he stretched out the other, saying, "*Al pari*;" thus paying him with the same coin. Besides these shadowed woodcuts, the traveller also composed different sorts of air; but he only succeeded in the phlogistic, which he easily manufactured by means of his tongue, and in which, like plants, he prospered and became coloured. It is more inhaleable, and better known by the name of *wind*, in order to distinguish it from the other uninhaleable phlogistic gases. After the phlogistic wind-manufacturer, who lectured well upon the other species of gas from the movable pulpit of his body, had departed with his tailor's wages, Henry made the following remark:—

"Thousands of persons should travel and teach at the same time. He who limits himself to three days may safely deliver excellent lectures on subjects which he understands but little. Thus much I already perceive, that now, on all sides, there are glittering

meteors revolving round myself and others, who throw us a flying light upon electricity, varieties of gases, magnetism,—in a word, on physics in general; however, that is nothing. But may I be choked with this duck's wing, if such pulpit-travellers and current teachers (not current scholars) might not lecture upon every branch of human knowledge to great advantage, especially on the most minute. Could not one person travel and lecture upon the first century after the birth of Christ, or upon the first millenary before his birth, for it would be no longer? I mean, could he not communicate it to the ladies and gentlemen in a few lectures,—another undertaking the second, a third the third, the eighteenth our own? I can picture to myself such transcendental travelling apothecaries' shops for the soul. For my own part, I would not even stop here; I would advertise myself as a peripatetic private tutor, and give chapters on the minutest points. For instance, in the electoral courts I would give instruction upon the surrender of the elective privilege; in old principalities, merely on the prince-iana; exegetically, in every place, upon the first verse in the first book of Moses; upon the sea-serpent, upon Satan, who may perhaps be the creature himself; upon Hogarth's tail-piece, as compared with some of Vandyke's heads upon gold and other head-pieces; on the true difference between hippocentaurs and onocentaurs, which best elucidates the distinction between geniuses and German critics;* upon Wolf's first paragraph, or Pütter's upon the funeral ale of Louis (XIV.) the

* The resemblance they are said to bear to the onocentaurs probably has reference to the rider Balaam, who wanted to pass an unfavourable judgment and could not.

magnified, and the public festival beneath his bier; upon the academic license which may be allowed to a cursory professor, in addition to his salary, of which often the greatest is that of shutting the door of the lecture-room: in short, upon every thing. Thus, and in this manner, it appears to me, when high circulating-schools are as common as village-schools,—when the scholars, as they have already begun to do, pass up and down between the towns like living weaving-shuttles, and every where attach the Ariadne thread, or at least the thread of their discourse, in order to weave it into something,—in this way, when every sun of a professorship carries about its own light, according to the Ptolemaic system, and pours it upon the dark orbs around it, fixed upon necks (which evidently is quite at variance with the Copernican system, in which the sun sits still in its pulpit in the midst of the travelling and circulating planets or students),—in this way, I repeat, one might cherish some hopes that at last something would be made of the world; at all events, a learned world. Philosophers would get nothing but the philosopher's stone, money,—but fools would get the philosophers themselves, and knowledge of all sorts, and, what is more, the restorers of science would flourish; there would be no ground left but classic ground, upon which we should consequently be obliged to plough and to fight. Every gallows-hill would be a Pindus, every prince's seat a delphic cave; and I should like any one to shew me an ass in the whole German territory. Such would be the consequence if all the world were to go upon learned and teaching travels, save and except, indeed, that portion which must necessarily stay at home, if there is to be

any one to listen and to pay, like the *point de vue*, for which, in military reviews, the adjutant is often selected."

All at once he sprung up, and said, "Would that I could go some day to Brückenau;* there, upon the bathing-tub, should be my professor's chair, and seat of the Muses. The tradesman's wife, the councillor's lady, the countess or her daughter, should lie, like one of the crustacea, in her closed basin and relic-box; and, as out of her other dress, should poke nothing out of it but her head, which it would be my business to educate. What discourses, like Antonius of Padua, would I not triumphantly hold with the soft tench, or siren, though she may rather be likened to a fortress surrounded by a water-dike. I would sit and teach upon the wooden lid of her glowing charms, kept like phosphorus under water. But what would this be compared to the good I could do if I were to insert *myself* into such a case and lining, and play in the water, inside, like a water-organ, and devote my few official talents to the bench of scholars on my lid? It is true, I should be obliged to make my illustrative gesticulations under the warm water, since only the head with the doctor's hat would appear, like a sword's hilt out of the sheath. However, I should send forth

* In page 163 of the Pocket-Book for Visitors to the Watering Places, 1794, we are informed that, while the ladies are lying locked up in their bathing-pans, young gentlemen sit on the covers in order to entertain them while they are under water. Reason, indeed, can have nothing to object to it, as the wood of the tub is as thick as silk, and since every one must be in a covering in which she is without a covering. But sentiment or fancy may raise an objection, on the same grounds that a blanket, a quarter of an ell thick, would be a less becoming and close dress for a ball-room than a gauze dress; if the innocence of the imagination is not to be spared, there is no other innocence to spare,—the senses can neither be innocent nor guilty.

out of the bathing-tub beautiful doctrine, luxuriant ears of rice growing under water, and water-plants—a philosophic water-system and such like, and dismiss all the ladies, whom even now in fancy I see surrounding my quaker and Diogenes tub, sprinkled with the most excellent instruction! By heaven! I ought to hasten to Brückenau, not so much in the character of bathing-visitor as of private teacher.”

CHAPTER XVI.

Departure. Pleasures of Travel. Arrival.

FIRMIAN departed. He left the hotel, which had been for him a Rhenish Monrepos, or Prussian Sans-souci, rather reluctant to exchange handsome apartments for bare walls. It had been particularly agreeable to one who had never before enjoyed any of the little comforts,—the soft padding, so to say, of this hard life, and had never had any other Jack at his service than the boot-jack,—to be able so easily to ring up, by means of the bell, to the stage of his chamber the chief actor,—the waiter John, from the scene-story; and, moreover, with plate and bottle in hand, which he alone and the public enjoyed, while the actor himself got nothing. While he was still standing at the door of the hotel, he paid Mr. Feldmann, the landlord, a compliment, which he shall immediately receive from me in print, as soon as it is out of the press, as a second glittering sign.

“Nothing is wanting to any of your guests,” he said, “but the most important article, Time. May your sun reach the sign of the Crab, and remain there.” Several of the inhabitants of Baireuth, who happened to be present and overheard the compliment, mistook it for a wretched satire.

Henry accompanied him about thirty paces beyond the reformed church as far as the churchyard, and

then parted with him more easily than he would have done but for the expectation of seeing him again in a few weeks, on his deathbed. He purposely refrained from accompanying him to Fantaisie, in order that his friend might give himself up quite undisturbed to the echo of enchantment, which the whole garden would send back to him from the spirit-harmonies of that blissful evening.

Firmian entered alone into the valley as into a holy mysterious temple. Every bush seemed to him transfigured by light, the brook as if flowing from Arcadia, and the whole valley spread open to him as a transplanted vale of Tempe; and when he reached the hallowed spot where Natalie had said to him, "Think of this day!" it seemed to him as if the sun poured forth a heavenly radiance—as if he heard the bee-like murmur of spirit-voices that had passed away—as if he must of necessity kneel down on this spot, and press his bosom on the dewy grass. Upon this trembling sounding-board he went over again the same path he had taken with Natalie, and one string after the other, now near a rose espalier, now from a fountain, now on the balcony, now in an arbour, gave again the old tones that had died away. In his intoxication his bosom became full, even to pain; a moist, transparent, radiant film covered his eyes, until at length it was condensed into a great drop. The brightness of the morning and the dazzling whiteness of the blossoms alone penetrated from the earth through his tear-filled eye, and the flower-woven veil of tears, into whose lily-bloom the soul sank down, overwhelmed and slumbering. It seemed as if, during the enjoyment of his Leibgeber's company, he had only felt

his love to Natalie in half its force, so powerfully fresh, and as with the air of heaven did Love fan him in this solitude with his ethereal flames. A youthful world blossomed in his heart.

Suddenly the bells of Baireuth broke in upon his reveries, announcing that the hour of his departure had struck, and he was seized with that feeling of anxiety with which, after parting, one lingers yet too long in the neighbourhood of the abandoned city of joy. He went away.

What a bright downy bloom fell upon all the meadows and mountains since he thought of Natalie and the never-to-be-forgotten kiss! The green world had now a language for him—that world which, on his hitherward journey, had been but a picture to him. He carried about him the whole day, in the darkest corner of his soul, a light-attracting magnet of joy; and, in the midst of distractions and conversation, he always found, on suddenly retiring within himself, that he had been the whole time full of happiness.

How often did he not turn back to gaze on the mountains of Baireuth, behind which, for the first time in his life, he had enjoyed days of youth! Natalie retreated behind him ever further towards the east; and morning-breezes, which had fluttered around the far-away lonely one, were wafted hither, and he drank the ether-flood as though it were the breath of his beloved.

The mountains declined. His paradise was submerged beneath the blue of heaven. His west, and Natalie's east, flew apart with double wings ever further and further from each other. As in by-gone years of youth, he hastened, between seeing and

enjoying, past the flower-strewn limbs of the outstretched Spring.

In the evening he arrived at Thaldorf on the Jaxt, where, on his outward journey, he had so sorrowfully reviewed his days, so barren of love. He came there now with another heart, which was full of love and happiness, and again he wept. Here, where, amid the melting magic-lights of that former evening, he had asked himself, "What woman's soul has ever loved thee as the old dreams of thy bosom so often pictured to thee?" and where he had returned himself a sad answer; here he could think of the evening at Baireuth, and say to himself, "Yes, Natalie would have loved me!" and then the old sorrow rose again, but transfigured, from the dead. He had taken the oath to remain invisible to her on earth; he now drew near his death, and would never see her again. She had gone before him—*died*, so to say, before him—and had taken nothing with her into the long, dark years of her life, "and here I weep, and look into my life," said he, wearied out; and he shut his eyes without drying them.

On the morrow another world dawned upon him,—not the better one, but altogether the old one. As if the concentric magic circles of Natalie and Leibgeber reached no further, and could include no more than just the little vale of longing on the Jaxt, every step that he now made towards his home changed the poetry of his life into poetical prose. The frigid zone of his days—the imperial market-town—already lay nearer to him; the warm zone, in which the faded leaves of his ephemeral blossoms of joy fluttered in the breeze, lay far behind him. But, on the other

hand, the pictures of his domestic life came forth more and more into the light, forming a picture-bible, while the paintings of his month of rapture receded into a dark picture-gallery. I ascribe it partly to the rainy weather.

Towards the end of the week, not only the penitent and the churchgoer, but also the weather, changes, and the heavens and man change their shirts and clothes. It was Saturday, and cloudy. In damp weather the walls of our brains are like those of our rooms, where the paper absorbs the moisture, and curls up into clouds, until the dry weather makes both tapestries smooth again. Beneath a blue sky, I long for the pinions of an eagle; but beneath a cloudy one, I only desire a goose's wing for writing. In the former case, we wish to go forth into the wide world; in the latter, into our grandfather's arm-chair; in short, eight clouds, especially when they drop, make us domestic, good citizens, and hungry; but the blue sky makes us thirsty, and citizens of the world.

These clouds palisaded the Eden of Baireuth. As the drops fell faster and bigger on the leaves, he longed to rest on the conjugal heart that belonged to him, and which he was soon about to lose, and to be in his own narrow chamber. At last, when the icebergs of precipitous clouds had melted into a grey foam, and the setting sun was drawn out of this hanging-pond like a plug, and it consequently poured down, appeared Kuhschnappel.

Discordant contending feelings were trembling in his bosom. In contrast with more liberal men, the narrow little-townish market-place seemed to him so crumpled up and office-like, so pompously stiff and

narrowly formal, so full of troglodytes, that he could have felt tempted to wheel his green trellis-bed in broad daylight into the market-place, and sleep in it beneath whole rows of grand windows, without troubling himself about the great and little senate behind them.

The nearer he approached the stage of his death, the more difficult did this first and last part but one appear to him. We are bold and daring abroad, fearful at home. The cottage smoke and vapour also gnawed into him, which in itself oppresses us all so much, that there is rarely any one to be found who can quite lift his head above the vapour. A confounded inclination towards still-sitting comfort, that is to say, nestles in man: like a great dog, he lets himself be pricked and teased a thousand times rather than take the trouble to jump up in lieu of growling. To be sure, if he is once on his legs, he does not easily lie down again. The first heroic deed, or, according to Rousseau, the first earned dollar, costs more than a thousand that follow after. On the pillow of this domestic inclination, especially while he was beneath the clouds, our Siebenkäs was stung by the prospect of the tedious, difficult, dangerous financial and surgical operation of a theatrical death.

But the nearer he approached the Rabenstein, the mouse-tower of his former confined life, the more quickly and vividly did the feelings of his former heart-oppressing stamping-mills, and of his future redemption, succeed one another in his anxious bosom. He always thought he would have to fret and be full of cares, as before, because he forgot the open heaven of his futurity,—just as after a painful dream we are still agitated, though the dream be over.

But when he beheld the dwelling of his long-silent Lenette, every thing disappeared from his eye and his heart, and nothing lingered there but love and its warmest tear. His bosom, which every thought had charged with the sparks of love, had need of the marriage-bond as a chain to conduct them off. "Oh!" thought he, "am I not, besides, to tear myself away from her so soon, and draw from her eyes the tears of delusion, and give her the painful wound of mourning and of a funeral? We shall then never see each other again—never, never more, thou poor one!"

He hastened on more speedily, passed close by the window-shutters of his fellow-commander Merbitzer, and bent back his head to look at the windows above. The latter was splitting wood for the Sunday, and Firmian made him a sign not to betray him by any sentinel-cry. The old co-czar nodded in answer, with outstretched fingers, that Lenette was upstairs in her chamber alone. The well-known voices of the house, the quarrelsome screeching of the bookbinder's wife, the subdued singing of the zealous prayer-utterer and curser Fecht, met him, like sweet fodder, as he crept up the stairs. The waning moon of his movable pewter property shone on him from the kitchen, gloriously bright and silvery. Every thing had arisen fresh scoured out of the bath of regeneration. A copper fish-kettle, which, as long as it remained unmended, could not poison any vinegar, glowed upon him through the smoke of the kitchen-fire, like the sun through a halo. He opened the door of the sitting-room gently, saw that no one was in it, and heard Lenette making the bed in the chamber. With a hammer-knocking in his bosom, he made a long and gentle stride into the clean apartment, which had

already put on its Sunday shirt of white sand, and on which the bed-making river-goddess and water-nymph had expended all her water-skill to make it a finished work of art. How peacefully and harmoniously every thing reposed, the one thing near the other, after the business and bustle of the week! The rain-star had risen over every thing: his inkstand alone was dried up.

His writing-table was occupied by a pair of large heads, which, as cap-blocks, were already decked in Sunday-caps, in order that, on the morrow, the stuff might go forth from these guardians of the sex (*curatores sextus*) to the several heads of the senators' wives.

He pushed the unclosed bed-room door wider open, and, after so long an absence, beheld his beloved wife standing with her back turned towards him.

All at once he thought he heard the fulling-mill steps of the Schulrath on the stairs; and, in order that he might pass the first minute on her heart, without the witness of a third eye, he said gently twice, "Lenette!"

She bounded round, screamed out, "Mercy on us! you?" and he was already on her bosom, and rested on her kiss, and said:

"Good evening, good evening; how are you? how have you been?"

His lips stifled the words he sought for. All at once she struggled out of his arms; two other arms seized him hastily, and a bass voice exclaimed, "We are also here! Welcome, Mr. Advocate of the Poor; praise and glory be to God." It was the Schulrath.

Poor feverish creatures that we are! Driven asunder by our own and others' infirmities, and yet ever again

drawn together by an eternal longing; in whom one hope after the other for another's love withers up, while our desires become nothing but remembrances! Our faint hearts are at least bright and brimful of love in the one hour when we return and meet again; and in the other hour, when we part, inconsolable; even as all the constellations appear milder, larger, and more lovely at their rising and setting than when they pass over our heads. But on the soul of him who loves ever and is never angry, these two twilight hours, ruled by the morning-star of meeting and the vesper-star of parting, fall too sadly,—he looks on them as two nights, and can scarcely bear them.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Butterfly Rosa in the Character of Mining-Grub. Thorn-Crowns and Thistle-Heads of Jealousy.

THE foregoing chapter was short, like our delusions. Alas, it was also one, poor Firmian! After the first storm of mutual catechising, after the information received and given, he became more and more aware that Lenette's invisible church, in which Pelzstiefel dwelt in the character of her soul's bridegroom, was to become a visible one. It was as if the earthquake of the previous joy had quite rent asunder the veil of the inmost sanctuary, in which Stiefel's head fluttered as cherub. But, to tell the truth, I am now speaking incorrectly; for Lenette *purposely* strove to exhibit a particular partiality for the Schulrath, who, in the rapture it occasioned him, flew from Arcadia to Otaheite, thence to El Dorado, and thence again to the Walhalla; a sure sign that his previous good fortune, during Firmian's absence, had not been so great. The Schulrath related that Rosa had quarrelled with the Heimlicher; and that the Venner, whom he had wished to make use of as a spinning-machine, had turned himself into an engine of war against him. This breach had been occasioned by the niece at Balreuth, whose hand the Venner had refused, because he had caught her kissing a gentleman of that place.

Firmian became as red as fire, and exclaimed, "Miserable reptile! The wretched giddy-pate has not

refused her, but has been refused himself. Mr. Schulrath, do you become the knight of the poor lady, and run this monster of a lie through the body wherever you may meet it. From whom have you heard this rubbish?"

Stiefel pointed quietly to Lenette: "From her."

Firmian started: "And from whom, then, have you heard it?"

She answered, with a blush that overspread her whole face: "Mr. von Meyern was here himself, and related it in person."

"But," interrupted the Schulrath, "I was immediately called, and cleverly got rid of him."

Stiefel then asked for the correct edition of the affair; and Firmian timidly, and with an unsteady voice, gave a favourable account of the rose-girl; a rose-girl in a threefold sense,—on account of the roses on her cheeks, her victorious virtue, and the gift of the green rose-buds. But, for Lenette's sake, he only awarded her the second prize, not the gold medal. He was obliged to bind the traitorous Venner as ram upon the altar of sacrifice in the place of Natalie, or at least harness him to her triumphal car as saddle-horse, and relate undisguisedly that the marriage had been prevented by Leibgeber, whose satirical sketches of Meyern had been the means of drawing her back, as it were by the sleeve, from the first step into the cave of the Minotaur.

"But," interposed Lenette, without the tone of interrogation, "Mr. Leibgeber had it all from you first."

"Yes," said he.

We mortals place on monosyllables, especially on

'yes' and 'no,' more accents than the Chinese possess. In the present case the 'yes' was a quick, unemphatic, cold 'yes;' for it was meant to be of no more importance than an 'and.'

She interrupted an astray-going question of the Schulrath's, with a question shot right into the bull's-eye: "*When* had Firmian been with her?"

Now for the first time the latter plainly observed with his telescope of war all sorts of hostile movements in her heart. He made a humorous diversion, and said: "Mr. Schulrath, when did you visit Lenette?"

"Three times at least in every week, sometimes oftener, and always at this hour," said he.

"I don't want to be jealous," said Firmian, "but observe, Lenette *is*, because I have been twice with Leibgeber in Natalie's company, once in the afternoon, and once in the evening, taking a walk in Fantaisie. Well, Lenette?"

She curled up her cherry lip, and her eye was like Volta's electrical condenser.

Stiefel departed, and Lenette sent after him down the stairs, from a face in which two fires were burning—the fire of anger and a more lovely one—a spark full of eye-love, enough to have exploded the whole powder-mill of a jealous man. The married pair were scarcely up-stairs in their room, when, by way of flattering her, he asked her:

"Did the confounded Venner tease you again?"

Hereupon all her fireworks, the scaffolding of which had long appeared in her face, went off cracking and hissing.

"Oh, of course you can't endure him. You are jealous of him, on account of your beautiful, *learned*

Natalie. Do you suppose, then, I don't know that you went about with one another the whole night in the wood, and that you hugged and kissed one another? Very pretty! Fie! I should not have believed it. Of course, *then*, the good Mr. von Meyern was obliged to leave the charming Natalie, with all her learning, in the lurch. Well, defend yourself: do!"

"I would have related the innocent point in which I am concerned in presence of the Schulrath," answered Firmian, gently, "had I not already perceived that you knew it. Do *I* then take it ill that he kissed you during my absence?"

This inflamed her still more; in the first place, because Firmian did not know it for certain—for *true* it was; and in the second place, because she thought—"It is very easy for you to forgive *now* that you love another better than me." But for the very same reason, because *she* loved another better than her husband, she ought to have pardoned him. Instead of answering his previous question, she, as usual, asked one herself:

"Have I given any one silk forget-me-nots, as a certain person gave a certain person? Thank God, I have mine safely redeemed in the drawers."

Heart now struggled with heart within him. His tender heart was pierced to the core by the unintentional association of such dissimilar forget-me-nots. But his man's heart was roused to anger at her hateful offensive and defensive alliance with the Venner, who, as was now evident, had sent the simple girl, whom Natalie had saved, into Fantaisie, as a screen, behind which to conceal himself and his web of revenge. Siebenkäs, in a voice of wrath, now turned his seat of

judgment into a penitent's stool for the Venner, abusing him as a canker-fly of female buds, a dove-hawk, a house-breaker of the treasures of marriage, and a soul-seller of mated souls; and declared with the greatest zeal, that it was not a Rosa who had refused a Natalie, but a Natalie a Rosa; and thereupon naturally forbade his wife, in a tone of command, to spread abroad any further copies of the Venner's lying half-romance: the consequence of all which was, that he transformed the poor woman, from head to foot, into a hard, pungent radish of Erfurt. . . .

But let us not allow our eyes to dwell too long and too condemningly upon this rash, or this eruptive fever, of poor Lenette. For my part, I will leave her in peace, and prefer attacking the whole sex at once. It is to be hoped I shall do so, when I assert that women never paint with more caustic colours (so that Swift's black art is but a water-colour art in comparison) than when they have to depict the physical defects of other women; further, that the most beautiful face cracks, swells, and sharpens into an ugly one, when, instead of sorrowing over the deserter, it betrays indignation against the female recruiting officer. To speak more correctly, every woman is jealous of her whole sex, not because her husband, but because all other men run after it, and thus become unfaithful to her. Every one therefore makes the same vow against this vice-queen of the earth which Hannibal made (and kept as well as made) against the kings of the earth, the Romans. Consequently every woman possesses the power, which Fordyce ascribes to all animal bodies, of making the others cold; and, in fact, it is natural that each one should wage war against a race consisting

entirely of rivals. Hence, many call themselves sisters, or sisterly-united souls,—for instance, convents of nuns and Moravians,—because sisters being the persons most disunited among themselves, this name expresses the disposition they bear towards one another; hence, too, it is that the *parties carrées* of Madame Bouillon consist of three men and only one woman; and this probably also induced St. Athanasius, Basil, Scotus, and other theologians, to presume that all women, with the exception of Mary, will rise again on the last day as men, in order that no anger or envy may exist in heaven.

There is one queen alone who is loved, nourished, and sought after by many thousands of her sex,—the queen-bee by the working bees, who, according to modern observation, are all females.

I will conclude this chapter with a word in favour of Lenette. The wicked enemy Rosa, in order to repay like with like, or with still worse, had poured out whole seed-bags full of weeds into Lenette's open heart, and had unloaded before her, first, compliments and news of her husband, and, at last, all sorts of depreciatory innuendos.

She had believed him the more readily, because he slandered, abandoned, and sacrificed a learned girl; and her spite against the guilty Siebenkäs could not but grow infinitely, considering she was obliged to wait so long before she could let it loose. She also hated Natalie on account of her learning, from the want of which she herself had lost so much. With many other women, she was of opinion that in a Venus the head was not genuine; which many connoisseurs believe to be the case with the Venus de Medici. What made

her most indignant too, was, that Firmian defended a stranger more than his wife, indeed even at his wife's expense; and that Natalie, in her pride, had woven a basket* instead of a net for so rich a gentleman as Meyern; moreover, she was vexed that her husband confessed every thing, because she considered his openness nothing but haughty indifference to her indignation.

What did Firmian do? he forgave. His two reasons for this I approve—Baireuth and the grave. The former had separated him from her for so long, and the latter was about to part them for *ever*. A third reason might also be, that, as regarded his love to Natalie, Lenette was not altogether in the wrong.

* Vide note p. 84.

CHAPTER XVIII.

After-Summer of Marriage. Preparations for Dying.

ALTHOUGH it was Sunday, and the minister opened his eyes as little as his hearers opened theirs, because, like many clergymen, he preached with his physical eyes shut, my hero nevertheless obtained from him the certificate of his birth, because it was indispensable for the insurance in the Brandenburg Widow's Provident Fund Institution.

Leibgeber had undertaken to provide for the rest. But enough of this; for I am not fond of talking much about the affair, since, some years ago, long after the debt of Siebenkäs had been repaid to the last heller, the Imperial Intelligencer publicly accused me of endangering morals and Widow's Provident Fund Institution, by my last volume of "Siebenkäs," and said, that he, the Intelligencer, felt it in consequence his duty to deal severely with me, after his manner, as I deserved. But am I and the Advocate, then, one and the same person? Is it not known to every one that, as in my marriage generally, so with regard to the Widow's Fund in particular, I act very differently from the Advocate, and that, up to this day, I have never died, either in appearance or in earnest, notwithstanding that for so many years I have paid a considerable sum into the above-mentioned Prussian Fund? Indeed, do I not even intend (this I may unhesitatingly assert) to

pay the specified sum into the fund for many years yet to come, even though it be to my own loss; so that at my death the fund will have gained more by me than by any other subscriber? These are my principles; and for the credit of the Advocate of the Poor I can say, that his principles differ little, if at all, from mine. His heart, which in all other respects was so true, had succumbed in Baireuth alone to the friendly storming and impetuosity of his Leibgeber, whose every wish he fulfilled, particularly as he had given his promise. Leibgeber in that moment of enthusiasm had intoxicated him with his own wild cosmopolitan spirit, which, in the unfettered transmigrations of his everlasting travels, led him to consider life too much in the light of a card and stage-mirror, as a game of chance and commerce, an opera buffa and seria at one and the same time; knowing, moreover, Leibgeber's contempt of money, and his pecuniary means, as well as his own, he consented to act a part in itself unjust, for which he was punished, while acting it, by sufferings, which he foresaw as little as the sermon of reproof which was to come out of Gotha.

And yet he might consider himself fortunate that only the Beckerian Intelligencer and not Lenette discovered Natalie's mock widowhood. Heavens! if the latter, with her silk forget-me in her hands (the *not* had flown away), had learnt Firmian's adoptive marriage! However, I neither wish the good woman to judge, nor will I judge her; but I will here ask all my female readers, and especially one among them, two remarkable questions:

"Would you not award my hero, from your seat of

judgment, for his upright warm behaviour to these two women, if not a chaplet of oak-leaves, yet of flowers, or, considering that four female hands play a duet sonata on his heart, at least a bouquet for his button-hole?" Dearest ladies, you cannot possibly give a better judgment than you have just given, although I am less surprised than pleased at it. My second question shall be put to you by no one but yourselves. Let every one ask herself:

"Suppose you had got this fourth volume in your hands, and were yourself Lenette, and were consequently acquainted with the smallest particular; how would the conduct of your married lord Siebenkäs please you? what would you do?"

I will answer for you: weep, storm,* scold, sulk, keep silence, break things, &c. &c.; so terribly is the finest moral feeling alloyed by selfishness, and bribed by it to give a double judgment upon one and the same cause. Whenever I am doubtful about the worth of a character or a resolution, I always assist myself by picturing it presented to me wet from the press in a novel or in a biography: if I then still assert that it is good, I may be sure that it *is* so.

It is more beautiful that the Graces should have dwelt in the old Satyrs and in Socrates, than that Satyrs should dwell in the Graces. The one that took up his abode in Lenette pushed about him with very sharp horns. Her unreturned anger now took the form of sneering; for his present mildness contrasted very suspiciously with his former Job-like disputations, whence

* The white blossom would weep, the red blossom storm; as the pale moon foretells rainy weather, the red moon a tempest (*pallida luna pluit, rubicunda flat*).

she inferred that his heart was completely hardened. Formerly, like a sultan, he liked to be served by mutes, until his satirical foetus, his book, had been lifted into the world by the Roonhuysian lever and the emperor's-cut with the pen-knife;* even as Zacharias remained dumb until the child ceased to be so, and was born, crying at the same moment as the old man.

Formerly their married life often resembled most other marriages, in which the wedded pair are like those twin sisters** who were connected together by their backs, and were always quarrelling, but never saw each other, and continually turned towards opposite quarters, until the one ran away with the other.

Now, on the contrary, Firmian allowed all Lenette's discordant tones to growl away of themselves, without getting angry. Upon all her sharp corners, upon her *opera supererogationis* in washing, upon the water-sprouts of her tongue, fell a mild light; and the colour of the shadow which her heart, made of dark earth, cast, like every other, was very much lost in the blue of heaven; as, according to Mariette, the shadows beneath the starlight become as blue as the sky above them. And did not the great blue starry heaven hang over his soul in the form of Death? Every morning, every evening, he said to himself, "How much ought I not to forgive; for we shall remain so short a time together!" Every occasion of exercising forgiveness took from the bitterness of his voluntary departure;

* Alluding, I suppose, to the habit of Napoleon cutting the table with his penknife when he was giving birth to an idea. A table thus cut is exhibited at Fontainebleau.—*Tr.*

** In the Gornorner county. Windisch, *Geography of Hungary*. Buchanan mentions a similar twin-birth in Scotland.

and as those who are about to take a journey, or to die, are ever ready to forgive, and still more so those who witness these two events, so, during the whole day, the deep hot-spring of love in his bosom never grew cold. He determined to traverse the short dark alley of weeping willows, which led from his house to his empty grave (a full one, alas, for his love), leaning only on the arms of those dear to him, and to rest awhile between his friend and his wife, on every moss-grown seat within it, on either hand a beloved one. Thus, as Lavater observes, Death not only beautifies our lifeless forms, but the thought of it gives a more beautiful expression to the countenance even in life, and new strength to the heart; as rosemary is both placed as a chaplet on the brows of the dead, and gives life to the fainting by its vivifying essence.

"I am not at all surprised at it," the reader will here say. "In Firmian's situation every one would have felt as he did,—at least I should."

But, dear friend, are we then not already in his situation? Does the distance or nearness of our eternal departure make any difference? Oh, since we only stand here below as delusively solid and red painted images near our niches, and, like the old princes, crumble into dust and sink into our sepulchres when the unknown hand shakes the mouldering image,—why then do we not say, like Firmian, "How much ought I not to forgive; we shall remain so short a time together!"

We should spend four better days of penitence, fasting, and prayer, than the usual ones, if we had annually to endure four hard hopeless days of illness in succession; because from the bed of sickness, that ice-

region of life near its crater, we should look down with elevated eyes upon the shrinking pleasure-gardens and groves of life; because *there* our miserable race-courses appear shorter, and only the men upon them greater; and because we should there love nothing but the heart, and exaggerate and hate no other faults but our own; and, lastly, because we leave the sick-bed with better resolutions than we enter it, for the first day of convalescence of the over-wintered body is the season of bloom of a beautiful soul. It steps, as if transfigured, out of the cold rind of earth into a warm Eden; it desires to draw every thing to its weak heavily-breathing bosom,—men, and flowers, and spring-breezes, and every other bosom which had sighed for it on the sick-bed. Like others after their resurrection from the dead, it will love every thing for an eternity, and the whole heart is a moist, warm, gushing spring full of buds, beneath a young sun.

How Firmian would have loved his Lenette, if she had not obliged him to forgive instead of caressing her! Oh, she would have rendered his sham-death infinitely more bitter to him had she been to him as she was in the honeymoon! But his former Eden now bore a harvest of ripe "grains of paradise" (thus formerly were called the sound peppercorns). Lenette heated the purgatory of jealousy, and roasted him there ready for the future heaven of Vaduz. A jealous woman cannot be cured either by word or deed. She resembles the kettledrum, which of all instruments is the most difficult to tune, and keeps in tune the shortest time. A warm glance full of love was a blister to Lenette, for thus he had looked upon Natalie; if he appeared cheerful, then it was plain he was thinking of the past; if

he wore a sad expression, it was again the same thought, but full of longing. Do what he would, his face was to her an open letter, or handbill of the thoughts that were behind it; in short, her husband altogether only served her as good violin-rosin, with which she made the horse-hair rough, that she might scrape the *viola d'amour* all day long.

He was not allowed to let fall many words about Baireuth, scarcely the name, for she knew well enough what he was thinking about. He could not even decry Kuhschnappel strongly without awakening the suspicion that he was comparing it with Baireuth, and that, for reasons well known to her, he preferred the latter; he therefore, whether seriously or from indulgence I know not, confined his preference of my present place of residence to the imperial market-town simply to the buildings, and did not extend the commendation to the inhabitants.

There was one person, however, whom he named and praised, utterly regardless of her misconstruction, and the vexation his frequent praise might occasion,—this person was his friend Leibgeber. But it was precisely Leibgeber who, by exposing the character of Rosa, and by aiding and abetting her husband in Fantaisie, had become even more intolerable to Lenette than he had formerly been in her room, with his free and easy manners and his great dog. Even Stiefel, as she knew, had several times felt himself obliged to condemn his offences against decorum.

"My good Henry will now soon arrive, Lenette," said he.

"And his filthy beast along with him?" she asked.

"You might well love my friend a little more,"

said he; "not at all because of his resemblance to me, but on account of his faithful friendship. You would then also find less fault with his dog, as you would in my case, supposing that I kept one. He wants a faithful creature on his never-ending journeys, who will accompany him through good and ill fortune, through thick and thin, as Saufinder does; and he looks upon me as just such another faithful creature, and is right therefore in loving me so much. Besides," added he, as many thoughts passed through his mind, "the whole faithful comradeship will not remain long at Kuh-schnappel."

However, he could not gain his suit for love by any love of his own. I begin to think that this was quite natural, and that Lenette, by her previous warm propinquity to the Schulrath, had been spoilt, and rendered susceptible by a temperature of love in comparison with which that of her husband must necessarily seem like a cold draught of wind. The jealousy of hatred acts like the jealousy of love; the cipher of nothing and the circle of perfection have one and the same symbol.

At last the Advocate was obliged to ground and prepare the way for his apparent death by seeming to fall ill; but he deluded his conscience into regarding this wilful bending and sinking towards the grave as nothing yet but an attempt to regain Lenette's embittered soul. Thus deluding or deluded, man ever pictures his deceit to himself either as smaller than it is, or as a philanthropic deception.

The Greek and Roman lawgivers invented dreams and prophecies, in which were contained the designs, and, at the same time, the permission to build, and

the materials of their plans. Alcibiades, for instance, invented a prophecy of the conquest of Sicily. Firmian, with suitable alterations, imitated this custom in his own household. He often spoke of his death in Stiefel's presence, for the latter sympathised more warmly in all that concerned him, and his feelings in consequence became Lenette's: he used to say that he would soon go away for ever,—that he would play at hide and seek without ever again being found by a friendly eye,—that he would go behind the bed-curtain of the shroud, and vanish. He related also a dream, which perhaps was not even an invention:

“The Schulrath and Lenette beheld in his room a scythe that moved backwards and forwards of itself; at last Firmian's empty dress walked about the room erect. They both said, ‘He must have on another.’ Suddenly the churchyard moved by in the street below with a hillock that was not yet green, and a voice exclaimed, ‘Sack him not below; it is past.’ A second softer voice called out, ‘Rest, rest, thou weary one!’ A third said, ‘Weep not, if thou lovest him!’ A fourth screamed in a terrific tone, ‘Jest, jest,—the life and death of all mankind!’” Firmian wept first, then his friend, and lastly, with the latter, his angry wife.

But he now longed impatiently for Leibgeber's hand, which would conduct him better and quicker through the dark foreground and the close sultry forehell of his artificial death. His heart was now too much softened for it.

Once, upon a lovely evening in August, it was more so than usual; on his countenance hovered that transfiguring serenity of resignation, of tearless emotion, of smiling mildness, which is seen when sorrow is rather

CHAPTER XIX.

The Ghost. Going Home of the Storms in August, or the Last Quarrel.
Clothes of the Children of Israel.

ONE night, about eleven o'clock, a noise, as if a few hundredweights of Alps had fallen in, was suddenly heard in the garret. Lenette went up stairs with Sophy to ascertain if it were the devil, or a cat. The women returned with white and disturbed wintry faces. "Ah, God preserve us!" said the landlady; "Mr. Advocate is lying up stairs stretched out on the pallet, like a corpse."

The living Advocate, who received the information, was seated in his room. He said it was not true, otherwise he also would have heard the noise. From this deafness all the women now surmised what it portended, namely, his death. The cobbler Fecht, who, by right of royal succession, was to-night the reigning watchman, resolved on shewing where his heart was, and armed himself simply with the watchman's staff (that was his whole park of artillery), but in secret he stuck a hymn-book, bound in black, into his pocket, as a regiment of saints, in case, by any accident, the devil really happened to be up stairs. On the way he repeated great part of the evening blessing, which was more than could reasonably have been required of him this evening when he was Watchman-archon, considering that his hourly call was but a long-drawn-out evening prayer, divided among the streets. He was

just about to march boldly up to the pallet-bed, when, unfortunately, he too saw the white-powdered face before him, and behind the bed a hell-dog with eyes of fire, which seemed to be grimly watching the corpse. Suddenly he stood, as if petrified into a lifeless sentinel-watchman hewn out of alabaster, hard-boiled in the sweat of his terror, and held his staff before him. He foresaw that if he turned round to jump down stairs, the thing would gripe him from behind, saddle him, and ride him down. Luckily a voice from below dropped like a cordial, or water of courage, into his heart, and he presented his boar's spear, with the intention of running the apparition through the body, or at least of measuring its cubic contents with the gauge. But when, at this moment, the white object began to raise itself slowly up, it seemed to him as if he had a pitch-cap on his head, and some one were wrenching the cap, together with the hair within it, each moment farther off his shoulders, and he could no longer hold the eel-spear with both hands, not because he let go the handle, but because the spear became as heavy as if his biggest journeyman were hanging at the other end of it. He laid down his arms, and, with three touches, flew boldly over the uppermost octave of the stairs down to the counter-bass touch, or step.

Down below, he swore, in presence of the landlord and all the lodgers, that he would fulfil the duty of night-watchman without a staff, for the spirit had possessed himself of it: indeed, he shivered, as if from frost, every time his eye wandered over the features of the Advocate's face. Firmian was the only one who volunteered to fetch the lance. When he got up stairs, he found, as he had guessed, his friend Leibgeber,

who had powdered himself over with an old cast-off wig, in order to introduce Firmian's mock-death, and break it to the people by degrees. They gave each other a silent embrace, and Henry said on the morrow he would come up stairs, and arrive in proper order.

On rejoining the people below, Firmian merely observed, that "there was nothing to be seen up stairs but an old wig; here was the spear of the nimble-footed spearsman; and he beheld before him two timid female hares and one male hare." But the whole conventicle knew very well what they had to think. A person must be totally devoid of understanding and empty-headed who would give a farthing for the Advocate's life; and the ghost-seer and seeresses thanked God heartily for their deadly fright, as being a pledge of their own more prolonged life. Lenette, during the whole night, had not the courage to sit up in the trellis-bed, lest she should see the very image of her husband.

On the morrow, Henry mounted the stairs with his dog, and in dusty boots. To the Advocate of the Poor it seemed as if the hat and shoulders of his friend must be strewn with blossoms from the Eden of Baireuth. He was as a statue to him out of the lost garden. For Lenette, on that very account, this palm-tree from Firmian's East Indian possessions in Baireuth was nothing but a prickly holly (we will not speak of *Saufinder*), and now less than ever could she find any pleasure in such a gooseberry-bush, such a thistle's head, which was as beautiful as though it came fresh from Hamilton's brush.*

* Who distinguished himself as much by his painted thistles as Swift by others.

I cannot help acknowledging, however, that, owing to his warm affection for his Firmian, his behaviour to Lenette, who was equally in the wrong and in the right, was somewhat too reserved and cool. We never hate a woman more heartily than when she torments our friend; as, on the other hand, a woman feels most dislike to the tormentor of her darling girl.

The scene that I am now about to describe makes me feel most strongly the wide difference that exists between the novel-writer, who can skip over every thing disagreeable, and sweeten every thing for himself, his hero, and his readers, and a plain historian like myself, who must dish up every thing in a purely historical form, and not trouble himself about seasoning it either with sugar or salt.

If formerly, therefore, I entirely omitted the following scene, it was a fault indeed, but not surprising, since it was in the years when I preferred pleasing my readers to instructing them, and desired to paint beautifully rather than to draw correctly.

For a long time past, Lenette had been unable to endure Leibgeber (or any thing belonging to him), because he, who was nothing but a common man, and had neither title nor reputation, conducted himself in public in so free and easy a manner towards her husband,—an advocate of the poor, a learned scholar, and long established citizen of Kuhschnappel,—and because he, as well as her husband, who was seduced by him, did not wear a queue; so that many persons pointed at them with their fingers, and exclaimed, "Look at the pair!" or, "*Par nobile fratrum!*" Lenette was able to gather these and still worse sayings from the most genuine historical sources. It is true

that, at the present day, it requires as much courage to append a tail to one's person as it did formerly to cut it off. In our days, unlike by-gone times, a canon does not need to make himself a queue in order to be a pleasant companion, and consequently he is not obliged to cast it off twice in the year, like a peacock's tail, that he may legally earn his income of 2,000 florins by appearing in the choir at vespers with close-cropt hair. He now wears it so at the card-table as well as in the choir.

In the few countries where the queue still prevails, it is chiefly as the pendulum of service and axis of state; and long hair, which, in former days, was worn by the Frank kings as one of the royal insignia, is now just as appropriately worn by our soldiers as a symbol of servitude, so long as it is not flying about loose and unbound, as was the case with the above-mentioned kings, but tightly laced and imprisoned by the queue-ribbon. The Frieslanders have long been accustomed to take an oath by grasping the queue, and this was called the Bödel oath;* and thus, in some countries, the military or flag-oath presupposes a queue; and if, among the ancient Germans, a queue borne aloft on a pole represented a parish,** is it not very natural that a company or regiment, every individual soldier of which wears his own tail behind, should form, so to say, a company-queue of patriotic union, and represent German nationality?

Lenette now no longer made any secret of the fact to her husband (for Stiefel supported her from afar), that, in the main, Leibgeber and his ways were little or not at all to her taste.

* Dreyer's Miscellanies.

** Westenrieder's Calendar.

"My late father was, for a long time, clerk of the senate," said she, in Leibgeber's presence; "but he behaved like other people both as regarded his dress and in other respects."

"In his capacity of copyist," answered Siebenkäs, "he was, of course, obliged to copy in one way or another, with his pens or with his coat. My father, on the contrary, cocked rifles for princes, and did not trouble himself about any thing else, and what happened, happened. There is a considerable difference between the two fathers, wife!"

She had previously, on several occasions, introduced the subject, and compared the clerk with the rifle-cocker, giving Siebenkäs to understand, by innuendoes, that his father had by no means been so gentlemanly as hers, and that therefore he could not have had the genteel education by which people learn manners, and in general how to comport themselves. This ridiculous contempt of his genealogical tree always irritated him so much that he could not help laughing at himself. However, he was less struck by this little side-thrust at Leibgeber than by her unusual care to avoid any physical contact with him: she could never be induced to touch his hand; and a kiss from him, she said, would "be the death of her." Notwithstanding all his pressing solicitations and questions, Siebenkäs could get no other answer from her than the following,—she "would tell him after he was gone;" but then, unfortunately, he himself would be gone, and in his coffin, that is to say, on his way to Vaduz.

Even this unusual obstinacy of a rigid cap-block could be borne by him pretty tolerably, at a time when

his one eye was warming itself beside his friend, the other was cooling itself beside the grave.

At length something else was superadded; and as I am sure that nobody will narrate the event more faithfully than myself, I may be believed. One evening, just before Leibgeber returned to his hotel (I think it was "the Lizard"), the deep black half-disk of a storm silently arched itself over the whole west of the sun, and closed ever nearer and nearer over the trembling world. It was then, while the two friends were conversing about the glory of a storm, about the union of heaven with the earth, the highest with the lowest, —about "the ascension of heaven into earth," to use Leibgeber's phrase, that Siebenkäs observed, how, in reality, it was only the imagination that pictured or developed the storm, and that by it alone the highest was linked with the lowest. I wish he had followed the advice of Campe and Kolbe, and instead of the foreign word "phantaisie," had employed the native German word for imagination; for the pure-speaking language-sweep, Lenette, began to listen as soon as he had uttered the word. She, who had nothing but jealousy in her bosom, and nothing in her head but the Fantaisie of Baireuth, had applied to it all that the friends had said in praise of the human imagination; as, for instance, how it (*i. e.* the Baireuth Fantaisie, thought Lenette) blessed us by the beauty of its lofty creations; how it was only by living in the enjoyment of its beauties that a Kuhschnappel could be endured (certainly, because one thinks of one's Natalie, thought she); how it strewed our barren life with flowers (with a few silk "forget-me-nots," said Lenette to herself); and how it (the Baireuth Fantaisie)

not only gilded the pills of life but also the nuts, indeed even the Paris-apple of beauty itself.

Heavens! what double meanings on all sides! for how excellently Siebenkäs might have confuted the error of confounding the phantasy, or imagination, with the Fantaisie, by simply shewing that little of the poetic one was to be found in that of the margraviate, and that Nature had poetically created beautiful romantic valleys and mountains which French taste decked out with its rhetorical flowers, fabrics of periods, and antitheses; and that Leibgeber's observation about the imagination, which gilded the apple of Paris, was applicable to the Fantaisie in another sense, for the French Christmas-gilding had first to be scraped off its natural apples ere the fruit could be tasted.

Scarcely had Leibgeber quitted the house and gone forth, as was his wont, into the storm, which he loved to enjoy out of doors, when Lenette's storm broke loose, before that of the heavens.

"So, I have heard, with my own ears, how this atheist and peace-breaker joins your name and Natalie's in the Fantaisie of Baireuth,—and is a woman to offer such an one her hand, or touch him with a finger?"

She let a few more thunder-claps roll after this; but I owe it to the poor woman, who, by many different mixtures, has become transformed into a fermenting-tub, not to recount all her frothings-up. In the mean time, the leaven of the husband also began to ferment; for to abuse his friend before his face (no matter in what misunderstanding it originated, and he did not even seek to discover it, since none could excuse it), was in his eyes a sin against the holy ghost

of his friendship, and he accordingly returned the thunder with interest.

It may be said in excuse of the man, and of course of the woman too, that the sultry atmosphere of the storm fanned the fiery fuel in his head into still fiercer flames, which made him pace up and down the room as if he were mad, and straightway blow up into the air the resolution he had formed to overlook every thing in his Lenette for the short time previous to his death; for he neither would nor could endure that the inheritor of his name should do injustice, either in word or deed, to his last friend in life and death. I shall convey some idea of the volcanic eruptions of the Advocate, which, for his sake, I shall pass over in silence, when I mention that he now screamed out, thundering in emulation of the storm:

"To such a man!" and with the words, "you too are a woman's head!" he gave a box on the ear to the cap-block, which was already proudly adorned with a hat and feathers. As this head was Lenette's favourite sultana among the other heads, nothing could reasonably have been expected to follow such a blow but as violent an outbreak of wrath as if it had happened to herself (just as Siebenkäs himself boiled over for his friend); but nothing ensued, save a silent flood of tears.

"O God!" she only said, "do you not hear the awful storm?"

"Thunder here, thunder there!" retorted Siebenkäs, who having once rolled over the philosophical summit of repose, which he had hitherto maintained, fell, according to both physical and spiritual laws, with ever increasing velocity until he reached the bottom;

"would that the lightning did but strike the heads of all the Kuhschnappel rabble who slander my Henry!"

As the storm increased in loudness, she spoke yet more mildly, and said, "Jesus! what a clap! Repent, lest it should strike you in your sins!"

"My Henry is out in the open fields," said he; "oh, that the lightning would but strike him dead, and me too with the same flash! Then I should be spared all this wretched dying, and we should remain together!"

So terribly daring—thus openly braving all life and religion—his wife had never before beheld him, and she therefore naturally expected that the lightning would fall on the Merbitzer-house, and strike both him and herself dead, to serve as a warning.

Such a dazzling flash of lightning now illumined the whole sky, followed by so tremendous a clap of thunder, that she offered him her hand, and said:

"I am willing to do every thing you desire; only, for God's sake, be penitent. I will even offer my hand to Mr. Leibgeber, and kiss him, whether he has washed his or not after his dog has licked it; and I will pay no attention, however much you may praise the gilding and blooming *Fantaisie* of *Baireuth*."

Heavens! how deep into two labyrinthical passages of Lenette's heart the lightning now threw its light, revealing to him how she had innocently confounded *Fantaisie* and imagination, as I have already related, and how he himself had mistaken her disgust for hatred! Respecting the latter, the fact was, that, in her feminine cleanliness and love of neatness, being more nearly allied to cats than to dogs, who disregard both and the cats too, Leibgeber's hand, after it had been

licked by Saufinder's tongue, was for her an Esau's hand full of chiragra and a thumb-screw for her own; her disgust was such, that she could not endure to touch him; and Henry's lips, even though ten days might have elapsed since the dog had sprung up to them, were the greatest scarecrows which disgust could offer to her. Even time was no lip-salve for her.*

But this time the discovery of the error did not bring peace as usual, but renewed the command of separation. Tears, indeed, came into his eyes, and he gave her his hand, and said:

"Forgive for the last time; in August, as it is, the storms go home." But he could neither offer nor receive a kiss of reconciliation. Irrevocably did this last fall from his warmest resolutions of forbearance pronounce the distance of their inner separation. What avails the insight into errors, when their sources remain? Of what avail to cut off a few streams from the ocean, when the clouds and the billows still exist? The insult he had offered to the cap-block occasioned him afterwards the greatest pain; it became for him a gorgon's head, which for ever threatened and took vengeance.

He now sought his friend with renewed love, be-

* Nothing is more unreasonable, unconquerable, and inexplicable than disgust,—this inconsistent alliance between the will and the mucous membrane of the stomach. Cicero says, the modest never willingly pronounce the word "modesty" (this transcendental disgust); and thus the squeamish person deals with disgust, particularly as physical and moral purity are neighbours, as the cleanly and chaste Swift proved in his own person. Even physical disgust, the object of which is more imaginary than real, affects the moral feeling more than is supposed. Pass through the streets with indigestible food or tartar emetic in your stomach, and you will feel towards twenty hearts and faces, and, on coming home, for still more books, a stronger moral and æsthetic distaste than at any other time.

cause he had suffered in his cause, and with new zeal, in order to arrange with him the plan of his death.

"Of what dangerous illness," said Henry, commencing the medical consultation, "would you prefer to die? We have the finest assortment of the most fatal cases before us. Will you have an inflammation of the windpipe, or of the bowels (*enteritis*), or an inflamed uvula; or would you prefer a brain-fever, or a choking rheum; or is, perchance, the croup, the colic, and the devil and his grandmother more agreeable to you? We have likewise at hand all the miasms and contagious matter we may require; and if to them we add, as a poison-powder, the month of August,—the harvest-month for reapers and doctors,—you can never survive it."

"Like most beggars," answered Firmian, "you have every calamity on sale,—blindness, lameness, and all. For my own part I am a friend to apoplexy,—this *volti subito*, this express post, and hurried baptism of death. I am sick of all lawsuit-like prolixities."

"That is indeed the *summarissimum* of death," observed Leibgeber; "but nevertheless, according to the best pathologies I am acquainted with, we must make up our minds to a triple attack of apoplexy. We cannot in this matter regulate our conduct according to Nature, but in accordance with a fundamental law of medicine, in obedience to which Death always forwards three bills of exchange before one is accepted and honoured *yonder*,—or he strikes three times with his auction-hammer."

"But, devil take it!" retorted Siebenkäs, in a comically earnest voice, "if the apoplexy strikes me power-

fully *twice*, what more can a physician require? However, I can't fall ill for three or four days to come; must wait for a cheaper coffin-maker."

The right of making coffins, as is well known, belongs to the carpenters by turns; and a person is forced to pay such a shipwright of the last ark whatever he demands, because the heritage of a dead person, like the palace of a departed doge and pope, is always given over for plunder to the undertaker, the excise-officer of Death.

"This respite from the gallows," answered Leibgeber, "may also serve another purpose: look here, I have bought this old family collection of sermons at half-price, because nowhere such impressive sermons are delivered as in this work, and that, moreover, in its wooden case, wherein sits a living preacher, shut up as it were in a pulpit."

In this cover was enclosed the beetle called the death-tick, wood-borer, or *plinus pertinax*, because, on being touched, it assumes the appearance of a dead animal, which it preserves amid all its tortures, and because its blows, which are nothing but a knocking at the door for its loved mate, are taken for the knocking of Death himself; wherefore, in former times, a piece of furniture in which this knocking was heard was considered an important prize and heir-loom.

Leibgeber went on to say, that, as he hated nothing in the world so much as a man who, from the fear of death, tried to outwit God and the devil by a sudden conversion; so he liked to hide the book of sermons for a few days, unobserved, among the furniture of hell-fearing sinners, in order to torment them well with the funeral sermon which the beetle preached in

advance, although the insect itself, like many other clergymen, was only thinking of worldly things. "But could I not take an opportunity of inserting the volume, together with the funeral preacher, among your books, that your wife might hear it and think of death—of yours, that is to say—and thus, by degrees, become more accustomed to it?"

"No, no," exclaimed Firmian, "she shall not suffer so much beforehand; she has already suffered enough."

"Be it so, then," said Henry; "though, in another sense too, my beetle would be very appropriate for you; since the death-tick, or *ptinus pertinax*, knows how to simulate death as well as you will."

As for the rest, he rejoiced that every thing fitted together so well, and that exactly a year had passed away since he had stepped upon the glass wig of Blaise, and had abused him without harming himself; for abuse remains in force only a year, with the exception of a critic's, whose reign lasts no longer than that of the rector in Ragusa, a month,—that is to say, as long as the periodical circulates in the reading society; even a book, which may be said to hold the rank of dictator in the republic of letters, may not, on account of its great influence, reign longer than a Roman dictator, *i. e.* six months.

They returned to a newly dressed and newly arranged room. Lenette did what she could to paint over the flaws in her house-keeping, like those in china, with flowers; and she always composed parts in which the broken string of a piece of furniture would not require to be touched.

On this occasion Firmian sacrificed more jests than was otherwise his wont, or than Henry now did, to her endeavours to erect screens every where round the steppes and fallows of their poverty. Women, even the unintellectual, are the most acute augurs and prophets in all that more nearly concerns themselves. Lenette is a proof of it. In the evening Stiefel was there. A discussion arose, and the latter openly declared himself to be of opinion, with Salvian, and many other good theologians,* that the children of Israel,—whose clothes, during the forty years' sojourn in the wilderness, never had a hole,—always remained of the same size, because of their dress; excepting the children, who wore a coat cut out of the wardrobe left by the dead, which grew in length and breadth together with their bodies. "In this manner," added he, "all the difficulties of the great miracle are easily solved by little by-miracles."

With a sparkling eye Leibgeber answered, "I already believed that when I was in my mother's womb. There was not a hole to be found in all the army of Israel, those which were brought out of Egypt excepted, and they never grew bigger. Even supposing, indeed, that, during the time of mourning, any one scratched a hole in his cheek or dress, both holes sewed themselves together again simultaneously. It is a crying pity, that this was the first and last army whose uniform was a fine kind of over-body, which grew with the soul that it enveloped, and where, by degrees, the frock-coat waxed strong unto an electoral mantle, and from a *microvestis* grew into a *macrovestis*. I perceive that, in the wilderness, the process of eating was a cloth manufactory.

* Bibliothèque ancienne et mod. T. iv. p. 59. 60.

Manna was the English wool, and the stomach was the weaving-loom. An Israelite who fattened himself sufficiently yielded at that period in his own person the proper produce of the land and wilderness. If I had then had to enlist soldiers, I should merely have hung the coat of the recruit on the military measure.

"But how is it in our wilderness, which does not lead to the promised land, but into the land of Egypt? In our regiments the private soldiers grow every year, but no coats; indeed, the uniform is only made for dry years and withered people; in wet seasons the clothes contract like good hygrometers, and perspiration steals more cloth than the army-tailor, or even than the purveyor. The general who might happen to count upon the stretching of the regimentals, considering, in addition to the example presented by the Israelites, that of the clothes'-moths and snails, who do not expand to suit their shells, but whose shells stretch to suit their bodies; such a chief, I say, would go mad on the subject, because the regiments would then fight in the state of the ancient athletes, and the regiments themselves would become desperate."

Lenette thought that this innocent sermon, which was merely directed against Stiefel's exegetic folly, was directed against her wardrobe. This German woman was like the German man, who looks for a *particular* satirical kernel within every rocket and firework-wheel of humour. Siebenkäs therefore begged him to pardon his poor wife—upon whose heart, as it was, so many sharp-toothed pains were now cast—the unavoidable, unconquerable ignorance of her interpretation, or rather to spare her the knowledge of it altogether.

At length a Kuhschnappel bagnio-proprietor died, and fell under the plane of the expensive carpenter.

"I have now no time to lose for my apoplexy," said Siebenkäs, in Latin; "for who can guarantee that no one shall die before me, and appropriate the cheap carpenter?"

It was therefore agreed that he should be taken ill on the following evening.

CHAPTER XX.

The Apoplectic Stroke. The President of the Board of Health. The Public Notary. The Will. The Knight's-Leap. The Preacher Reuel. The Second Stroke.

In the evening Henry lifted the curtain of the tragedy, full of comic gravedigger scenes, and Firmian lay on the bed speechless, with an apoplectic head and the whole of his right side paralysed. The patient could only forgive himself for his imposture, and the pain it occasioned Lenette, by taking a secret oath to send her anonymously the half of his annual income when he was inspector at Vaduz; and by picturing to himself that, through his death, she would gain joy, freedom, and her lover. The tenants of the house gathered in a circle round the stricken man; but Leibgeber drove them all out of the room, saying that the sufferer required rest. It afforded him real pleasure to be able to go on uttering humorous lies one after the other. He filled the office of hereditary imperial door-keeper, and locked the door against the doctor, who was prescribed.

"I will prescribe some little remedy for the patient myself," said he, "but that little will restore to him, for a time, the power of speech. The confounded dead-rivers of mixtures, Mr. Schulrath (for the latter had been fetched immediately), are like the rivers which every year demand a dead body."

He prescribed a simple cooling draught, and read aloud, as he wrote:

"R Conch. citratæ sirup. j.
Nitri crystallisati gr. x
D.S. cooling mixture."

"But, before all," said he, in a commanding tone, "the feet of the patient must be bathed in warm water."

The whole house knew that all would be unavailing, since his death had been but too truly foretold by the pale apparition; and Fecht felt a sort of compassionate satisfaction that he had not prophesied wrong.

Scarcely had the invalid swallowed the cooling draught, when he was again able to speak intelligibly, though not loud, to the astonishment of the burial insurance company in the chamber. The domestic tribunal was hardly glad of it; but the good Henry had now an excuse for resuming his cheerful mien. He consoled the Advocate's wife, by saying, that "pain here below was nothing more than an initiation to something higher,—the box on the ear or sword-stroke, by which a man is made a knight."

The sick man had a very tolerable night after the draught, and he himself again cherished some hope. Henry would not permit the good Lenette, with her eyes full of tears and sleep, to watch by his bedside at night. He said, he himself would wait on the patient, if he should grow worse in the night; but the latter event was not possible, since in the night they agreed with one another, like princes, in Latin, that death, or the fifth act of this tragic interlude, which in the tragedy of life is only a scene, should take place on the morrow evening.

"Even to-morrow," said Firmian, "is too long. My Lenette's distress is inexpressibly painful to me. Alas! like David, I have to make a wretched selection between famine, pestilence, and war, and no other choice is left me but his. You, dear brother, you are my Cain, and you kill me, and believe as little as he did in the world to which you send me.* Verily, before you prescribed me the cooling powder which obliged me to speak, I wished, in my silent gloom, that the jest might become earnest. One day I must pass through—through the gate beneath the earth which leads from the dwellings around into the fortress of futurity, where we are safe. O Henry! it is not the act of dying that is so painful, but the *parting*—I mean, from worthy souls."

"Against this last bayonet-thrust of life," answered Henry, "Nature holds before us a broad Achilles'-shield. On the death-bed our moral feelings become cold before we ourselves become so physically; a strange courtier-like indifference to all from whom we have to part creeps like frost through the dying nerves. Sage spectators afterwards say, 'Behold, only a Christian can die so resignedly and trustingly!' Do not mind, good Firmian. The few sad, hot minutes you must suffer until to-morrow are, for the sick spirit, like a good warm bath of Aix water, which, to say the truth, has a horrible stench of rotten eggs, but after some time, when the water is cold, it does not smell at all."

On the morrow, Henry commended him, in the following strain: "As Cato the Younger slept peace-

* The Rabbis pretend that Cain murdered his brother because the latter confuted him when he (Cain) denied the immortality of the soul. Thus the first murder was an *auto-da-fé*, and the first war a religious war.

fully the night before his death (history heard him snore), so you also appear this night to have given a renewed example of that greatness of soul, in these marrowless times: if I were your Plutarch, I should mention this circumstance."

"But in earnest," answered Firmian, "I should be very glad if, some years hence, when death shall have sent the second bill of exchange, some clever man, some historical painter—West—should honour this strange first death of mine with a good description for the press." . . . A biographical West has, it seems, so honoured it; but I will candidly confess that it gave me incredible pleasure to find among the documents this bedside conversation and wish, which I am so literally fulfilling.

Thereupon Leibgeber said: "The Jesuits in Löwen once upon a time edited a little book, in which the terrible end of Luther was well described, but in Latin. Old Luther got hold of the work, and translated it, as he did the Bible, merely adding at the end, 'I, Dr. Martin Luther, have myself read and translated this narrative.' Were I in your place, I would also write this remark when I translated my death into English."

Do write this, dear Siebenkäs, since you are still alive; but, by all means, translate me!

The morning generally brings refreshment to the human laid-corn, whether upon the hard sick-bed or on the softer mattress, and with its morning breeze it raises up the bowed flowers and human heads; but our invalid remained lying. The disease made anxious progress, and he could not disguise from himself that he retrograded; at all events, he determined to settle

his affairs. This first quarter to the hour of dying, struck by the death-bell, pressed like a heavy, sharp bell-hammer into Lenette's heart, out of which the warm stream of early love burst forth in bitter tears.

Firmian could not look upon this inconsolable weeping; he stretched out his arms beseechingly, and the suffering one laid herself gently and obediently between them, on his bosom; and now the warmest love mingled their hearts, their tears, and their sighs; and though deeply wounded, they reposed happily in each other's arms, at so short a distance from the boundary-hill of parting.

For the sake of his poor afflicted wife, therefore, he grew visibly better: this amelioration was also necessary, to explain the good humour with which he executed his last will. Leibgeber expressed satisfaction on the patient's being once more in condition to dine on the tablecloth of the coverlet, and to drain entirely a large plate-full of soup like a pond.

"The cheerful humour," said Leibgeber to Pelzstiefel, "which gleams forth again in our invalid, gives me great hopes; but he evidently only eat the soup to please his wife."

No one ever lied oftener, and was fonder of lying from satire and humour, than Leibgeber; and no one could be more intolerant to serious dishonesty and cunning than he was. He could tell a thousand lies in jest, and no two in need; in the former case, every deceitful expression of countenance and lying phrase was at his command; in the latter, not *one*.

In the forenoon, the Schulrath and Merbitzer the landlord were invited to the bedside.

"Gentlemen," began the sick man, "I intend this afternoon to have my last will, and to say at the judgment-bar of Nature three things that I desire, as was the custom in Athens;* but I will now at once make known one testament before making the second, or rather the codicil of the first. I request my friend Leibgeber to pack up and keep all my written papers as soon as I myself am packed up in my last cover with its address. Further, having as precedents the Danish kings, the old Austrian dukes, and the noble Spaniards—the first of whom were buried in their armour, the second in lions' skins, the third in miserable capuchin hoods—I will and appoint that no one shall refuse to plant me in the bed of the other world with the old pod or shell in which I flourished in the first—in a word, just as I am *now* whilst making my will.

"This injunction entails the necessity of a third, which is, that the woman who lays out the corpses be paid, and immediately dismissed; for during my whole life, I have had an especial antipathy to two women, the one who washes us into life, and the other who washes us out of it, only in a somewhat larger wash-tub than the former, *i. e.* the midwife, and the woman who lays out the dead: the latter shall not lay a finger on me, and indeed nobody shall but my Henry."

His dislike to these servants of life and death originated, probably, from the same cause as my own, that is, from the imperious and greedy manner in which these two planters and purveyors of the cradle

* Every condemned person in Athens was permitted to say publicly three such things.—Casaubon.

and the bier squeeze and press us, precisely in our two disarmed hours of highest joy and deepest grief.

"Furthermore, I will and appoint that Henry shall roof over and shield my face for ever, as soon as it has made the sign of parting, with the long-necked mask which I brought down out of the old box. I desire also, when I depart from all the fields of my past, and hear nothing behind me but the rustling hay-cocks of the aftermath, to have the silken garland of my wife laid upon my bosom, as the symbol of lost joys. With such mock-insignia, it is most suitable to go out of a life that has dished us up so many pasteboard pies full of wind.

"Lastly, I will that no one on my departure shall blow the horn after me from the church-tower, as after a Carlsbad patient; for, like the visitors of Carlsbad, we sick watering-place visitors of life are received and sent away with music on the towers. This I more particularly ordain, because the servants of the church are not so reasonable as the Carlsbad steeple-warder, who only demands three pieces per head for blowing visitors in and out."

He now desired Lenette's profile to be given him in his bed, and said, in a faltering tone, "I beg my good Henry and Mr. Landlord to quit the room for a minute, and to leave me alone with Mr. Schulrath and my wife."

When it was done, he looked long, in silence and with warmth, on the little dear picture. His eye overflowed with sorrow, like a broken embankment. He handed the portrait to the Schulrath, paused, overpowered by his emotions, and at length said:

"To you, faithful friend, to you alone, can I give

this beloved image; you are her friend and my friend. O God! no one upon the whole wide earth will take care of my good Lenette if you forsake her. Weep not so bitterly, dear one; he will provide for you. O my dearest friend, this helpless, innocent heart will break in its lonesome sorrow, if *you* do not protect and tranquillise it! oh, forsake it not, as I do!"

The Schulrath swore by the Almighty he would never forsake her; and he took Lenette's hand and pressed it, without looking at the weeping one; while with drooping eyes he hung over the countenance of his dying friend. But Lenette pushed him away from the bosom of her husband, liberated her hand, and sunk upon the lips which had so touched her heart; and Firmian clasped her with his left arm to his refreshed heart, and stretched out his right hand, under cover, to his friend; and he now held to his oppressed bosom the two nearest heavens of earth united—friendship and love. . . .

And this it is which ever consoles and delights me in you deluded and disagreeing mortals—that you all love one another heartily when you behold each other in pure human form, without bandages and fogs—that we are only growing blind when we fear we are growing cold—and that, as soon as Death has lifted our brothers and sisters above the clouds of our errors, the heart melts in love and blessedness when it beholds them, free from the distortions of the concave mirrors and fogs here below, floating in the transparent ether, as beautiful beings, and sighs, "Ah, in such a form as this, I had never misunderstood you!" Therefore every good soul stretches out its arms to the men whom the poet in his cloud-built heaven exhibits to

our eyes below as genii; and yet, if he were to let them sink down upon our bosoms, in a few days they would lose their beautiful transfiguration upon the dirty ground of our wants and errors. Thus, too, the crystal water of the glaciers, which refreshes without giving cold, must be caught as it trickles from the ice-diamond, because it is made impure by air as soon as it touches the ground.*

The Schulrath went away, but only to the doctor. This noble generalissimo of friend Hain, who did not bear the title of councillor of the upper board of health for nothing, but for money, was quite willing to visit the sick man—firstly, because the Schulrath was a man of reputation and fortune; and secondly, because Siebenkäs, as subscriber to the corpse-lottery—of which the doctor was corresponding member and *frère servant*—ought not to die; for this burial-fund formed a convenient fund of supply for the shareholders.

Leibgeber was dreadfully terrified on beholding the officer of the upper board of health approach in order of battle; he feared lest, through the doctor's agency, matters should really become worse, so that Siebenkäs might chance to leave behind him the celebrity of Molière, who died upon the stage while acting the *Malade imaginaire*.

He considered the relation existing between physician and patient as uncertain as that between woodpeckers or bark-bugs and trees, inasmuch as it is still subject to dispute whether the trees wither in consequence of the boring and egg-laying of these animals,

* De Lüc, *Little Travels for Travel-Dilettanti*, vol. III.

or whether, on the contrary, these animals come flying to the trees because their bark is already worm-eaten and the trunk dead. For my own part, with respect to the woodpeckers and bugs, and also the physicians, I believe that both are alternately cause and effect, and that the existence of an animal cannot of necessity presuppose decay, otherwise on the creation of the earth a dead horse must likewise have been created for the carrion-flies, and a great goat's cheese for the cheese-mites.

The president of the board of health, Oelhafen, passing the healthy ones with angry impoliteness, went straight up to the sick man, and immediately fell upon the second hand of life—the medical divining-rod, the pulse. Leibgeber set the plough of satirical wrath in his face, drew crooked furrows, and determined to plough deep.

"I find," said the learned practitioner, "a true case of nervous apoplexy from over-fulness; the physician should have been called in earlier. The full hard pulse announces a repetition of the stroke; but an emetic which I will administer will produce the best effect;" whereupon he drew forth little emetic *billet-doux*, wrapped up like *bonbons*. He had the emetics on sale himself, and exercised this harmless trade throughout the country like a Jew pedlar. There were few diseases in which he could not employ his emetics as means of grace, waggon-levers, pump-handles, and purgatories. He was particularly active in the employment of these remedies in apoplexies, inflammation of the lungs, headache, and bilious fevers. As a preliminary step, he cleared the first passages, he said, and, in so doing, often cleared away the possessor of

the first passages at the same time, who afterwards very easily entered the *last* passage of all flesh.

Leibgeber kneaded his queer face into all sorts of shapes, and said: "Mr. Colleague, and Protomedicus von Oelhafen, we may hold a *concilium*, or *consilium*, or *collegium medicum* here. It seems to me that my cooling draught was very expedient, since it yesterday restored Apoplectico his power of speech."

The Protomedicus took him for a quack, and said to Pelzstiefel, without so much as looking at his colleague: "Order warm water to be brought; I will administer it myself."

"Shall we two take it together," exclaimed Leibgeber, indignantly, "since both our gall-bladders are emptying themselves? The patient must not, shall not, cannot take it."

"Are you a practising physician, sir?" said the councillor of the upper board of health, in a tone of haughty contempt.

"I am," said he, "a doctor jubilant, and that from the time I ceased to be a fool. You must recollect that there is in Haller an account of a fool who once maintained he was beheaded, until he was cured by a hat of lead. A head roofed and mitred with lead could be as sensibly felt as a head that is filled with it. I was almost as great a fool myself, Mr. Colleague; I had an inflammation of the brain, and learnt too late that it was already cured and extinguished; in short, I fancied that my head had peeled off, just as the mouldering feet fall off, like crab's claws, if one has eaten too much ergot. When the barber came, and threw down his purple work-bag and quiver, I said, 'My dear Mr. Master Spörl, flies, tortoisés, and adders,

indeed, have lived, like me, after they had lost their heads, but there was little on them to be shaved. You are a man of sense, and perceive that I can no more be shaved than the torso in Rome. Where were you thinking of soaping me, Mr. Spörl?' He had scarcely gone when the wig-maker entered. 'Another time, Mr. Peisser,' said I; 'unless you wish to curl the air around me, or the hair on my breast, you may stick your combs into your waistcoat pocket again. Since midnight I have been living without frieze and cornice, and, like the tower of Babel, I am without a cupola. But if you will look for my head in the neighbouring chamber, and append a *queue* or *loupé* to my *caput mortuum*, I will accept it, and put on the head as a queue-wig.' Luckily the rector magnificus, a physician, arrived, and beheld my sorrow, as I struck my hands together, exclaiming, 'Where are my four brain-chambers, and my *corpus callosum*, and my *anus cerebri*, and my egg-shaped *centrum*, which, according to Glaser, is the dwelling-place of the imagination? How can a rump-parliament apply spectacles and listening trumpets? The causes are well known. Is it come to this with the best monœcious head in the world, that it has got no head to house its seed?' But the rector magnificus sent for an old narrow doctor's hat from the university cupboard, and fitting it on me with a gentle blow, said, 'The faculty places its doctor's hat only upon a head—upon a nothing it could not stick at all;' and by means of the hat a new head grew on my imagination as upon beheaded snails; and now, ever since I was cured myself, I cure others.'"

The councillor of the upper board of health turned away from him the eyeball of a basilisk, and let himself

down stairs in anger by his cane ribbon, like a bale of goods, without taking with him his unsealed emetic—his passport to the other world—which remained to be paid for out of the purse of the patient.

But the good Henry had to wage a new war with Stiefel and Lenette, until Firmian threw himself between the parties as mediator, by the assurance that he would on no account have taken the emetic, since he could not have borne it, because of an old disease in his chest (alas! he meant it figuratively), and some gordian knots in his lungs (the knots of his earthly drama).

However, there was no concealing the fact, simulate as he would, that he grew worse and worse. He was threatened every moment by the ricochet-shot of the stroke.

"It is time," said Firmian, "that I should make my will. I am eager for the land-notary to arrive."

This notary, as is well known, draws up all the last wills and testaments, according to the town and village laws of Kuhschnappel.

At length he entered—the notary Börstel, a withered, dried-up snail, with a round, shy, listening, flat-button face, full of hunger, anxiety, and attention. Many thought that his flesh was only smeared over his bones, like the new Swedish stone-stucco.

"What shall I write for your honour to-day?" began Börstel.

"My elegant codicil," said Siebenkäs: "but first try me with a few questions, such as are usually put to testators, in order to see if I am in my right mind."

The latter inquired, "For whom do you take me?"

"For Mr. Notary Börstel," answered the patient.

"That is not only perfectly correct," replied Börstel, "but it is evident that you are not at all delirious; and we may proceed without further delay to draw up the last codicil of your will."

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF THE ADVOCATE OF THE
POOR, SIEBENKÄS.

"Undersigned, who is now about to turn yellow and fall off, together with other August apples, desires, on his near approach to death, which dissolves the corporeal bondage of the spirit, to perform a few more back-steps, and side-steps, and great-grandfather dances, three minutes before the Basle dance of death."

The notary paused, and asked in astonishment, "Am I to put much more of such stuff to paper?"

"In the first place, I, Firmian Stanislaus Siebenkäs, alias Heinrich Leibgeber, will and appoint that my guardian, Mr. Heimlicher von Blaise, do and shall pay over, within a year and a day, the 1200 florins of which he has so impiously defrauded me his ward, to my friend Mr. Leibgeber, inspector in Vaduz,* who will afterwards faithfully deliver them over to my dear wife. If Mr. von Blaise should refuse, I here lift up my forefinger, and swear solemnly upon my death-bed, that, after my decease, I will prosecute him,—not in the courts at law, but in the spirit, be it, that I appear to him in the form

* *i. e.* to himself. He desires his inheritance to be delivered over to himself rather than to his wife; possibly because she might within this term have married a rich man. In this way, too, he would more easily learn the fact, should the Heimlicher neglect to obey his command, and he could then carry out the threat which follows.

of the devil, or as a tall white man, or merely as a voice, according as circumstances, after my death, may allow me."

The notary paused, with the feathered arm in the air, and quaked with terror. "I fear," said he, "that if I write down such things, Mr. Heimlicher will, in the end, catch me by the wing."

But Leibgeber, with his body and face, cut off his retreat across the hell's portal of the chamber.

"Further, as reigning sovereign of the shooters, I will and appoint that no war of succession shall make my will a succession-powder for innocent people: further, that the republic of Kuhschnappel, to whose Gonfaliere and Doge I was balloted by the shooters' balls, shall wage no defensive wars, because it cannot thereby defend itself, but only offensive wars, in order at least to extend the boundaries of its empire, since they cannot be covered,—and that all its members shall be as sparing of wood as their dying imperial market-town father. Now that woods and forests are turned into charcoal faster than others grow up in their place, the only antidote to such a state of things is, that the climate itself be heated, and turned into a great drying-kiln and field-stove, in order to do away with the necessity of room-stoves; and, indeed, this has been the means already adopted by all just forest-commissioners, who first root out all the frost materials—the woods—which are full of lingering winter. If we reflect how admirably modern Germany contrasts with the Germany mapped out by Tacitus, warmed, as it now is, simply by the clearing away of the forests, we may come to the safe conclusion, that, at last, as soon as there is no more timber, we shall acquire a degree of warmth,

when the air will be our fur-cloak. The present superfluity is also burnt into ashes in order to enhance the price of raft-wood; as in the year 1760 eight million livres' worth of nutmegs were publicly burnt in order to keep up the price.

"Further, as king of the Kuhschnappel Jerusalem, I will and decree that the senate and people (*senatus populusque Kuhschnappeliensis*) be not damned but blessed, especially in this world; further, that the city magnates do not swallow the nests (houses) of Kuhschnappel with the Indian ones; and that the taxes, which must pass through the four stomachs of the gatherers—through the paunch, the reticule of honeycomb stomach, the manyplies stomach, and the reed—shall, nevertheless, be converted at last from chyle into red blood (from silver into gold), and after having circulated through the milk-vessels, the milk-bag, and milk-passage, shall be properly impelled into the veins of the body of the state. Further, I will and appoint that the great senate and little senate"

The notary wished to leave off, and shook his head strenuously; but Leibgeber was amusing himself with the rifle by which the testator had mounted the shooter's throne, whereas others raise themselves to the throne by the leaping-poles of other people's ramrods; and Börstel continued to write in the morning-sweat of his brow:—

. "that the judge, the treasurer, the Heimlicher, the eight senators, and the sheriff, shall listen to reason, and reward no merit but that of other people; and that the rascal Blaise and the rascal Meyern shall daily lay thrashing hands upon each other, as relatives, in order that, at least, there may be one to punish the other."

Thereupon the notary sprung up, said that it took away his breath, and went to the window to inhale a purer air; and, perceiving a heap of tanner's bark piled up at a little distance below the window, he was impelled by fright, which showed him on from behind, to jump on the window-ledge. After such a first step, before a witness could catch him by the skirts, he made a second long one in the empty air; and, like the tongue of his own steelyard, tumbled out of the window, so that he could easily reach the low footstool—I mean, the heap of tanner's bark. As a falling artist, he could not do better, after his arrival, than make use of his face as a graver's tool, and plastic model, and copying-machine, and therewith faintly engrave his image with reversed bas-relief on the hillock; his fingers likewise lay upon it as busy graver's instruments, and copied themselves; and, with the notary's seal, which he had put down near the inkstand and taken with him, he accidentally countersigned the occurrence—so easily does one notary, like a count palatine, create a second. But Börstel left the co-notary, and the whole *lusus naturæ*, behind him, and, as he walked home, thought of other things. The Messieurs Stiefel and Leibgeber, on the contrary, after his disappearance, gazed on the second outer man, which lay extended on the anatomical stage below them, smelling of muscovy leather—whereupon the author will not add a word of his own, but simply quote Henry's observation:

“The land-notary desired to affix to the will a larger seal, which no one could forge, and has therefore sealed it with his body; and down there we behold the entife sphragistic impression.”

The last will was signed by the witnesses and the

testator, as far as it went; and more than such a half-military testament could, under existing circumstances, scarcely be expected.

The evening now drew near, when the sick man, like his own earth, turns away from the sun, and only directs his gaze to the twilight evening-star of the next world—when the sick go to it, and the healthy gaze upon it. And Firmian now hoped to give the parting kiss to his dear wife, and to sink gently to rest, when, unfortunately, the blustering deacon and preacher Reuel rustled into the room. He came in the church-uniform, in surplice and bands, in order to reprimand with due severity the invalid, under whose chin he had tied the ribbon of marriage in double bows, for defrauding him of the confession fee, as it appeared he intended to make a circuit in order to avoid paying the communion-toll on the road to heaven and hell.

As the ancient botanists, Crol, Porta, Helvetius, Fabrizio, &c. from the resemblance which a plant bore to an illness, inferred (according to Linnæus) that it was the natural remedy for it, and therefore prescribed yellow plants, such as saffron, curcuma, for the jaundice; dragon's blood, japan-earth, for dysentery; a cabbage for head-ache; pointed things, such as fish-bones, for stitch; every specific thus resembling, in some remote degree at least, the disease for which it was administered,—thus, too, in the hands of efficient preachers, do the spiritual means of salvation, sermons, exhortations, &c. assume the form of the diseases—anger, pride, avarice—against which they are directed; so that frequently there is no other difference between the bed-ridden patient and his physician than that of position. Just such an one was Reuel. At a time

when people are so willing to decry the Lutheran minister, and call him a hidden Jesuit, or monk, he was especially zealous to distinguish himself, not merely by words but by deeds, from the latter, who calls nothing his own, and is not allowed to possess property, and, therefore, very openly to hunt after and snap at possessions. Hoseas Leibgeber endeavoured to make himself a turnpike-bar and turnstyle for the preacher, and stopped him at the threshold with the words, "Nothing that your reverence can say will be of any avail. I myself tried yesterday, *volti subito*, to convert and restamp him *citissime*; but it ended by his upbraiding me with being unconverted myself—and that is true; for whistlers upon whistlers are perched and gnawing among the summer rape-seed of my opinions."

Reuel replied, in a tone vibrating between flats and sharps, "A servant of God does the duty of his holy office, and seeks to save souls either from atheism or other deadly sins; but the consequences rest with the sinners themselves."

The black storm, charged with the lightnings of Sinai, consequently rolled into the dark chamber. The preacher swung his wide sleeve like a saving flag over the atheist (as he considered him) stretched out upon his sheet, and sowed the good seed upon the patient, as the peasants in Sweden sow rape-seed, by spitting it upon the beds: he told him, in a sick-bed exhortation (which is usually the antipodes of a funeral oration), such as may, perhaps, one day overtake me and the reader, beneath the last sheet, and which I need not therefore send to press from Baireuth to Heidelberg, since it may be heard on the way in every sick man's bed-chamber,—in that discourse, like a straight-

forward man, he told him plainly to his face that he was a devil's roast, and just done. The done-roast shut his eyes and endured it; but Henry, who was distressed that the preacher should pinch the loved ears and loved heart with his red-hot pincers, and who was indignant because he knew that his only motive for so doing was to frighten the sick man into confession, caught hold of the flying sleeve, and gently reminded him:

"I thought it would be impolite, Mr. Preacher, to inform you beforehand that the invalid is hard of hearing, and to urge you to scream. As yet he has not heard a word.—Mr. Siebenkäs! who stands there?—Dou you see, how little he hears? Work at converting me over a glass of beer, that will please me better; and I can hear better. I fear he is now somewhat delirious, and will take you for the devil, should he see you,—because it is with him that dying persons have to fight their last battle. It is a pity he did not hear your discourse; it would have vexed him terribly, for he will *not* confess; and a sufficient degree of vexation, according to Haller, in his eighth volume of Physiology, has often prolonged the life of dying persons for weeks. Yet he is a sort of true Christian, after all, though he was wont to confess as seldom as an apostle, or a father of the church. After his departure you shall learn from me how peacefully the true Christian dies, without any convulsions, distortions, and agonies of death. He is as accustomed to the spiritual as the hooded-owl to the church towers; and as these latter remain sitting on the belfry in the midst of the ringing, so I will guarantee that our Advocate too will remain quite tranquil during the tolling of the death-

bell, because from your sermons he obtained the conviction that he would live again after death."

There was in this, to say the truth, a somewhat hard hit at Firmian's mock-death and his faith in immortality,—a jest which only a Firmian could at once understand and forgive. But Leibgeber also wished to attack in earnest those persons who look upon the accidental physical tranquillity of a dying man as a certain proof of his peace of spirit, and the struggles of the body as storms of the conscience.

The only answer Reuel returned was: "You dwell with the mockers. The Lord will find them. I have washed my hands."

But as he would rather have filled them, and as he could not change the devil's child into a penitent, he went away red and silent, humbly accompanied down stairs by Lenette and Stiefel, who bowed to him repeatedly.

Let us not deem the gall-bladder of our good Henry, which is his swimming bladder, and, alas! often also his ascending hysterical ball, greater than it is,—but let us judge this natural fault still more mildly, because Henry had already seen, at so many death-beds, such spiritual *frères terribles*, such *gallows-patres*, who strew salt upon the sick withered heart; and because he believed, as I do, that among all the hours of a man's life, the last must be the most indifferent in a religious point of view, inasmuch as it is the most unfruitful, and no seed can sprout in it and bear the fruit of deeds.

During the short absence of the polite pair, Firmian said, "I am sick, sick, sick of it. I will act no longer.

In ten minutes I will tell my last lie, and die; and would to God it were no lie! Let no light be brought in, and cover me immediately with the mask; for I foresee that I shall be unable to control my eyes, and beneath the mask I can let them overflow as much as they please. O Henry! my good friend!"

The chaos infused into Reuel's exhortations had at least made the weary figurant and mimic of death serious and soft. Henry, in his affectionate solicitude, relieved him of all his lying parts, and took them upon himself; and he therefore called out loudly and anxiously as the pair entered the room, "Firmian, how are you?"

"Better," he rejoined, but with a voice of emotion; "in the earthly night the stars are shining, but I am bound to the clod, and cannot soar up to them. The shore of the beautiful spring is steep, and we swim on the dead sea of life so near the shore, but the ephemera has no wings. Death, this sublime evening red of our St. Thomas's day, this great amen of our hope, shouted across from yonder shore, would appear before our low couch, like a beautiful crowned giant, and lift us up by degrees into the ether, and rock us there, were it not that only broken, stupified men are thrown into his gigantic arms. It is illness alone that takes from death his glory; and the pinions of the aspiring soul, laden and stained with blood, tears, and clumps of earth, trail, broken upon the ground; but death is a flight and no fall only *then* when the hero throws himself upon one single fatal wound,—when man stands there, like a spring world full of new blossoms and old fruit, and the next world suddenly passes by him like

a comet, and takes the little world, unwithered, along with it, and flies with it over the sun."

But this elevation of Firmian would to stronger eyes than those of Stiefel have been a sign of returning strength and health. On the eye of the spectator, not on him who is struck down, does the battle-axe of death cast a flash of light. It is with the death-bell as with other bells—only he who is afar off, and not he who himself stands within the murmuring hemisphere, hears its elevating sounds and tones.

As in the hour of death every bosom becomes more sincere and transparent, like the Siberian glass-apple, whose kernel, in the period of its ripeness, is only covered by a crystal case of transparent, sweet flesh; so Firmian, in that dithyrambic moment, so near the naked blade of death's scythe, would have been capable of offering up all the mysteries and blossoms of his futurity,—that is, of discovering them,—had it not been for his word and his friend; but there was now nothing left for him but a patient enduring heart, silent lips, and weeping eyes.

Ah! and was not this apparent leave-taking in very truth a real one; and as he drew his Henry and the Schulrath with his trembling hands to his heart, was it not oppressed by the sad certainty that he would lose the Schulrath to-morrow, and Henry in a week, for ever? The following address was therefore the simple truth, but a sad one:—

"Alas! in a short time we shall be sundered! Oh, human arms are crumbling bonds, and so soon snap asunder! Fare ye well, and better than I ever deserved it should fare with me. May the chaotic stone-heap of your days never roll from beneath your feet nor over

your heads, and may a spring clothe the rocks and cliffs around you with green and with berries! Good night, for ever, dear Schulrath! and thou, my Henry" He pressed the latter to his heart, and was silent in the embrace, thinking of the nearness of the true parting.

But he should not have thus feverishly excited himself by these stings of parting. He heard his Lenette weeping in secret behind his bed, and, with a deep death-wound in his full heart, he said, "Come, my beloved Lenette, come, and take leave of me!" And he stretched out his arms wildly to his invisible loved one. She tottered forwards, and sunk upon his bosom, and he was speechless under the crushing weight of his feelings. At last he said gently to his trembling wife, "Patient, faithful, tortured one! How often have I caused you sorrow! O God, how often! Will you forgive me? will you forget me?" (a convulsion of sorrow drew her closer to him.) "Yes, yes,—oh, forget me quite, for you were not happy with me." Their sobbing hearts suffocated the voice, and only their tears were able to flow! A great sorrow gnawed his wearied heart, and he repeated, "No, no, with me, verily, you had nothing, nothing but tears; but Fate will make you happy, when I have forsaken you!" He gave her the last kiss, and said, "Oh, live happy, and let me depart!"

She said again and again, amid a thousand tears, "You will certainly not die!"

But he embraced her, and then lifted her fainting from his bosom, and said, solemnly, "It is past. Fate has divided us. It is past!"

Henry led the weeping wife gently away, and wept himself, and cursed his plan; and then making a sign to the Schulrath, he said, "Firmian will now rest."

The latter turned his swollen face, distorted by agony, towards the wall. Lenette and the Schulrath mourned together in the adjoining room. Henry waited until the heaving billows were allayed, and then inquired gently, "Now?"

Firmian gave the sign, and Henry screamed out, distractedly, "Oh, he is dead!" and threw himself upon the immovable body, in order to protect it from examination, with true hot tears which flowed like blood from the near wound of their separation. An inconsolable pair rushed from the next room into the bed-chamber. Lenette wanted to throw herself upon her husband, who was turned away, and exclaimed in sorrow, "I must see him,—I must once more take leave of my husband."

But Henry ordered the Schulrath in confidence to support the afflicted wife, and lead her out of the room. He was able to do the first, though his own self-control was but an artificial one, put in order to prove the victory of religion over philosophy; but he could not take her out of the room when she perceived that Henry took up the mask of death.

"No," she exclaimed, angrily, "surely I may be allowed to look at my husband once more."

Henry held up the mask, gently turned the face of Firmian, on which the half-dried tears of parting yet lingered, covered it with the mask, and thus for ever removed it from the weeping eye of his wife. The great scene raised his heart, and he looked fixedly on

the mask, and said, "Such a mask does death lay over the faces of us all. Thus shall I too, one day, stretch myself out in the midnight sleep of death, and grow longer and heavier. Thou poor Firmian! Was, then, thy life's *partie à la guerre* worth the candles and the trouble? True, indeed, we are not the players, but only the playthings, and old Death pushes our heads and our hearts, like balls across the green billiard-table, into his bag, and the little death-bell rings whenever he has made a stroke. In one sense, indeed, you continue to live,* supposing that the fresco-painting of ideas can be taken without injury from the crumbling wall of the body.** Oh, may you be happier in your postscript life! But what is it? It will also go out. Every life upon every sphere will one day burn out. All the planets have only the license of giving to drink on the premises, and can take in no lodgers; but they pour out for us once—quince-wine, currant-juice, brandy, but, for the most part, a cordial gargle which we cannot swallow, or even sympathetic ink (i. e. *liquor probatorius*), sleeping-draughts, and dye-liquid; then we travel on from planet-inn to planet-inn, and proceed from one millennium into the other. O thou good God! whither then, whither? whither? However, the earth was the most miserable tap, where, for the most part, only beggars, rogues, and deserters stop to drink, and where, if we go only five steps further, we can enjoy the best pleasures either in the memory or in the imagination; and where, if we chew these roses like others instead of smelling them, and swallow the

* Leibgeber alludes at one and the same time to the next life, in which he is an unbeliever, and to Firmian's continuation of the first in Vaduz.

** In Italy, large fresco-paintings are removed uninjured from the wall.

conserve of rose-leaves instead of inhaling the fragrance, we get nothing from it but sedes *

“Oh, may it fare better with thee, thou quiet one, in other taverns than it did here, and may some restaurateur of life open a wine-cellar for you instead of this cellar of vinegar!”

* Rose-leaves have an effect like senna on the bowels.

CHAPTER XXI.

Dr. Oelhafen and the Medical *Chaussure*. Mourning Administration. The Saving Death's-Head. Frederick II. and Funereal Elegy.

LEIBGEBER first of all quartered the sorrowing Lenette down below with the barber, in order to render the intermediate condition of the dead man after death more easy.

"You shall keep away from the sight of the sad memorials that surround us," said he, "until the deceased is carried away."

She obeyed, from fear of ghosts; and he was thus more easily enabled to give the deceased something to eat. He compared him to a walled-up vestal, who, as Plutarch mentions in his Numa, found in her sepulchre a lamp, bread, water, milk, and oil,—“If,” continued he, “you do not more nearly resemble the earwig, which, when it is cut in two, turns round to eat its own mutilated half.”

By such jokes he cheered, or at least endeavoured to cheer, the cloudy and autumnal soul of his dear friend, round whose eyes lay nothing but the ruins of his former life, from the clothes of the widowed Lenette to her work. He was obliged to have the cap-block, which he had struck during the storm, removed into a corner out of sight, because, he said, it made gorgon-faces of him.

On the following day, the good Leibgeber, the watcher of the corpse, had the labours of Hercules,

tion, and Sisyphus put together. One congress and piquet after the other came to see the dead man and to eulogise him,—for we only clap men and actors when they go away, and find the dead moral, even as Lavater thinks their physiognomy beautified;—but he drove the people away from the chamber of death. “Such was the last will of my late friend,” said he.

The chambermaid of death then entered, and wanted to scrub and dress the body. Henry wrangled with her, paid her, and dismissed her. Moreover, he was obliged to behave before the widow and Pelzstiefel as if he were concealing a bleeding heart beneath the cloak of an outward resignation. “But I can easily see through it,” said the Schulrath; “and he only affects the philosopher and stoic because he is no Christian.” Stiefel meant that empty hardness of the Zenos of the world and of the court, who resemble the wooden figures, to which a painted coat of stone-dust gives the appearance of stone-statues and pillars.

Further, the share or dividend from the burial-fund was raised, which had first to be collected on a plate from the members of the society: thereby the president of the board of health, Oelhafen, as paying member, became acquainted with the event. The latter took occasion on his forenoon round of visits to his patients to enter the house of mourning, with the special object of vexing his brother in art, Leibgeber. He therefore acted as if no news of the death had come to his ears, and first inquired how the invalid was.

“According to the latest bulletin,” said Henry, “he is—at an end. He has gone to sleep in peace, Mr. Protomedicus Oelhafen. In August, March, and September, Death has his press-gang, his vintage.”

"The cooling draught," answered the revengeful physician, "has it seems sufficiently tempered the heat, since he is *cold*."

Leibgeber was pained, and he said, "Alas, alas! however, we did what we could, and got him to swallow your emetic; but he brought up nothing, save the worst diseased matter of man, the soul. You, Mr. Proto-medicus, are, so to say, a judge of the criminal court of judicature, and are invested with power over life and death,—but as I, in my character of advocate, only exercise the lower jurisdiction, I did not dare risk any thing, least of all the man's life, or what a face he would have made at it!"

"Well, and he has made one at it, and a long one too,—the hippocratic face," replied the physician, not without humour.

"I must believe you," answered the other mildly, "since, as a layman, I seldom happen to see such faces, but physicians can daily study the hippocratic science of physiognomy upon their patients; and, indeed, the experienced physician is distinguished by a certain sharp-sighted sagacity, which enables him to foretel the death of his patients; a thing that is quite impossible to such as are not masters of the healing art, and have not seen many die."

"As such an excellent connoisseur of the art," asked Oelhafen, "you naturally applied mustard-plasters to the feet of the patient,—only, of course, they would not draw?"

"I did stumble on the happy thought of soleing the feet of the invalid with mustard and leaven, according to the rules of art, and of putting a tapestry of blisters on his calves,—but the patient, who, as you

are aware, was always a mocking humorist, called such things the medical shoeing, and us physicians death's shoemakers, who apply to the unfortunate patient, after Nature has already cried out, 'Beware! head off!' spanish-flies for spanish-boots, mustard-plasters for cothurni, cupping-glasses for fetters; as if without this medical toilette, and without red shoe-heels of mustard, and red cardinal-stockings of blisters, a man could not enter the next world. Thereupon my late friend kicked with his heels against my face and the plaster, and compared us artists to stinging flies, which always attack the legs."

"He is probably right about the stinging-fly, so far as regards yourself; a shoemaker of death might also take the measure of something for your head—*caput tribus insanabile*"—retorted the doctor; and he went away in haste. I have mentioned, in a former place, something about his emetics; to which I will now add, that if he really kills his patients by them, the difference between him and a fox* is, that the latter, according to the ancient naturalists, simulates from afar the sound of a man vomiting, in order to lure the dogs and attack them. Nevertheless, the greatest friends of physicians must acknowledge certain limitations to their penal judicature or royal decree of excommunication. As, according to the European law of nations, no army may fire upon another with glass or poisoned bullets, but only with leaden ones; as, moreover, no one is allowed to throw poison among the provisions, or into the fountains of the enemy, but only dirt; so also the medical police permits a physician, practising the higher branch of judicature, to ad-

* Plin. H. N. viii. 30.

minister freely narcotica, drastica, emetica, diuretica, and the whole pharmacopeia, and it would be against the police-regulations if he were to be in the least impeded; but if, on the other hand, the first *medicus* of city or country should venture, in the circle of his jurisdiction, to administer poison-balls instead of pills, ratsbane powders instead of violent emetic powders (unless it be for the ague alone that he prescribes the mouse-poison), it would be considered a very serious matter by the upper courts of justice; indeed, I believe that even a whole medical college would not be exempt from inquiry if any member happened to pierce a man, whose veins he was free to open at any hour with the lancet—in lieu thereof with a sword, and to transfix him with a weapon which might be an instrument of war, and not a surgical instrument. Thus in the criminal acts we find that physicians did not escape who threw a man from a bridge into the water, instead of into a smaller mineral or other bath.

As soon as the friseur had heard of the arrival of the money from the burial-fund into the harbour of safety, he came up-stairs and offered to make some curls and a pigtail for his dead tenant, and leave the comb and pomatum to accompany him under-ground. Leibgeber was obliged to economise for the poor widow, who, as it was, was already half-plucked by so many tearing-pincers, eagle-claws, and fangs of the servants of the dead; and he said that he could not purchase any thing from him but the comb to stick into the dead man's waistcoat-pocket: he could then make his hair-toilette with it, according to his own pleasure. He said the same thing to the barber, adding, that in the grave, where, as is well known, the

hair continues to grow, the whole secret and fruit-bearing society wore beautiful beards, like Swiss sixty years of age. The two hair co-operators, who revolve round the male sphere, like two satellites of Uranus, took themselves off, with clipped hopes and lengthened faces and purses; and the one, in his gratitude, wished he had to shave the undertaker Henry, and the other that he had to dress his hair. They grumbled upon the stairs: "It would be no wonder if the dead man were not to rest quietly in his grave, but were to go about and frighten the people."

Leibgeber thought of the risk he incurred of losing the fruit of all this long deception, should any one by chance desire to take a peep at the late gentleman while he was in the next room; for he locked the door whenever he absented himself for a longer time. He therefore went to the churchyard and took a skull out of the charnel-house, which he hid beneath his coat. He gave it to the Advocate, and said to him, that if the head were pushed under the green lattice-bed in which *defunctus* lay, and were made to communicate with his hand by a green silk thread, it might, at least in the dark, be drawn forward as a Belidor's ball, or used as an ass's jawbone against the Philistines, who were to be frightened away should they attempt to disturb the repose of the warm dead.

To be sure, in case of extreme need, Siebenkäs would have wakened out of his long trance, and repeated the stroke for the third time, thereby conferring a great favour on the medical system; however, the skull was preferable to the stroke. Firmian was affected with melancholy at sight of this attic of the soul, this cold, spiritual breeding-stove, and said: "The

wall-finch* finds, doubtless, a softer and more tranquil nest in it than fell to the lot of the bird of paradise which has flown out."

Leibgeber now bargained with the servants of the church and school. He paid the fees, the bridge-toll, &c., with muttered curses, and said: "The day after to-morrow we will lay the late Advocate to rest quite quietly, and without any pomp or ceremony."

No one had any concern with it except what each was very willing to do—that is, pocket the carriage-money with which corpses are franked into the next world; all except one old and poor servant of the church, who said he thought it a sin to take a farthing from the poor widow, for he knew what poverty was, but it was just that which the rich could not know.

In the evening, Henry went down to Lenette and the hair-dresser, and left the key in the door, because the tenants who dwelt in the upper story were much too timid, since the ghost-report, even to stick their heads out of their own doors.

The hair-curler, who was still angry that he had not been allowed to curl the hair of the deceased, be-thought himself that it would at least be something if he sneaked up-stairs and cleared away the whole forest of hair. The consumption of hair and fire-wood is greater than their supply by growth. No dead person, therefore, should be allowed either to have a coffin or to keep his own hair, which even the ancients cut off for the altar of the subterranean gods. Merbitzer consequently sneaked into the room on tip-toe, and already held open the jaws of the scissors.

* This bird, like a greater Psyche, makes his nest in skulls.

Siebenkäs easily squinted into the chamber through the eye-holes of the mask; and from the scissors, and the trade of the landlord, he readily guessed the threatened misfortune and Pope's "Rape of the Lock." He perceived that in this extremity he could count less upon his own head than upon the bald one beneath the bed. The landlord, who in his timidity had left the door open behind him, ready for a retreat, at last approached the plantation of human flower-pot-plants, with intent to act as reaper in this harvest-month, and combining the parts of shaver and hair-dresser, avenge them both. Siebenkäs wound the thread upon his covered fingers as well as he could, in order to draw up the skull; but as this proceeded much too slowly—Merbitzer, on the contrary, much too expeditiously—he was obliged to help himself in the mean time by blowing out of the mouth-opening of the mask a long night-wind upon the landlord, especially as evil spirits so often breathe upon men. Merbitzer could not explain to himself this dubious draught, which blew real mephitic gas and a deadly simoom wind upon him, and his warm component elements began to freeze up to ice; but the deceased unluckily had soon shot away his breath, and he was obliged to reload the air-gun slowly. This truce brought the lock-robber to himself, and set him on his legs again, so that he once more prepared to seize hold of the tassel of the night-cap, and to pull off this thin flying gossamer, the cap, from the field of hair. But just as he was seizing it, he heard a noise as if something were moving underneath the bed; he stopped, and waited calmly, since it might be a rat, to see what the noise would resolve itself into. But whilst he was waiting, he suddenly felt

something round rolling up his legs, and that it was creeping further every moment. He immediately put down his empty hand, for the other held the open scissors, and, impotent as callipers, it embraced the up-rolling slippery ball, which seemed endeavouring to creep upon it. Merbitzer became stiff in the legs, and his blood curdled; but another touch with the hand, and a glance at the approaching head, gave him, before he became quite curdled into cheese, such a kick of terror, that he was driven across the threshold like a cannon-ball shot straight at the mark by the powder of fear. He tumbled into the room below with open scissors in his hand, with open mouth and eyes, and a pallid spot upon his face, compared with which his linen and his powder were court-mourning. Nevertheless, in this novel situation, to his honour be it told, he had the presence of mind not to reveal a syllable of what had passed, partly because ghost-stories cannot be related before the ninth day without the greatest harm to the narrator, partly because he could not well speak of his intended piracy of hair on any day.

At one o'clock at night Firmian informed his friend of the whole transaction, with the same fidelity as I have sought to observe towards the reader. This was a hint to Leibgeber to set a good body-guard before the high corpse; to which office, in default of chamberlains and court domestics, he could not appoint any one else but Saufinder.

On the last morning, which was to give Siebenkäs notice to quit, arrived the *casa santa* of man, our *chambre garnie*, our last seed-pod,—the coffin, for which must be paid whatever might be demanded.

"It is the last building-grant of this life, the last cheat of the carpenter," said Henry.

Half-an-hour past midnight, when neither bat, nor night watchman, nor beer-toper from the public house, nor night-light, was any longer to be seen, and only a few field-cricket were to be heard in the sheaves and a few mice in the houses, Leibgeber said to his sad and anxious beloved friend:

"Now march! As it is, since you have put off the mortal and entered into eternity, you have not been a single moment happy or cheerful. I will provide for the rest. Wait for me at Hof, on the Saale. We must meet once more after death."

Firmian fell upon his warm face in silence, and wept. Once more he went over, in the twilight hour, all the blooming places of the past, behind which he sank, as into a grave: his softened heart loved to deposit the last tears upon every piece of dress belonging to his sorrowing, bereaved Lenette, upon every piece of work and trace of her domestic hand. He pressed her betrothal-garland of roses and forget-me-not hard upon his burning bosom, and placed the rose-buds of Natalie in his pocket; and thus mute, oppressed with stifled sobs, and cast out, as it were, by an earthquake from the earth upon the icy coast of a strange world, he crept down the stairs behind his best friend, squeezed his helping hand once more, at the threshold of the house, and Night soon enveloped him in the grave of her giant shadow. Leibgeber wept bitterly when he was gone. Drops fell upon every stone which he collected, and upon the old block, which he caught up in his arms, to embed in the coffin-shell, in order to give it the weight of a corpse. He filled the haven of our

bodies, closed the ark of the covenant, and suspended the key of the coffin, like a black cross, upon his bosom. Now, for the first time, he slept tranquilly in the house of mourning. All was done.

On the morrow, he made no secret of it before the bearers and Lenette, that the preceding evening, with great effort, he had succeeded in lifting the corpse with both arms, and placing it in the coffin. She desired to look once more upon the body of her late lord, but Henry had lost the house-door key of the painted abode in the darkness. He helped to search diligently for it (while all the time he carried it about him); but it was quite in vain; and many of the bystanders soon guessed that Henry was only deceiving, and desired to spare the weeping eyes of the widow any further sight of the accumulated matter of sorrow.

They went forth, with the mock passenger in the *quasi*-coffin, to the church-yard, which glistened in dew beneath the clear blue sky. In Henry's heart there crept an icy-cold feeling, on reading the inscription on the grave-stone. It had been lifted off from the Moravian-like, flat grave of Siebenkäs's great-grandfather, and turned over, and upon the smooth side shone the newly-engraved inscription: "Stanislaus Firmian Siebenkäs, departed this life, 24th August, 1786."

This had formerly been Henry's own name, and upon the reverse side of the monument stood his present name Leibgeber. Henry reflected that in a few days, with his name cast away, he would fall as a little brook into the ocean, and there flow without shores, and melt into other billows. It seemed to him, as if he himself, with his old and new name, were descending into the tomb; and he was so oppositely affected, that it was as

if he was wedged into the frozen stream of life, while from above a hot sun was beaming down upon the ice-field, and he was thus lying between glowing heat and ice. Add to this, the old Schulrath now came running up, with his pocket-handkerchief to his nose and eyes, and in stammering accents of sorrow he imparted the news that had just arrived in the imperial market-town, that the old king of Prussia had died on the seventeenth.

The first movement that Leibgeber made was to look up to the morning sun, as if Frederick's eye were beaming from it morning fire over the earth. It is easier to be a great king than to be a righteous one; easier to be admired than to be justified. A king lays his little finger on the longest arm of the enormous lever, and, like Archimedes, lifts with the muscles of his fingers ships and lands into the air; but the machine alone is great, and the mechanician, Fate,—not he who uses it. The voice of a king re-echoes in the countless valleys around him, like a thunder-clap, and a mild beam, cast by him, is reflected from the throne covered with innumerable mirrors, into a glowing condensed focus; but Frederick could only be *lowered* by a throne, because he had to *sit* upon it; and without the confining crown, the girdle of thorns and magic circle of the head, the latter would have become larger: and happy, great spirit, still less, couldst thou become; for, although thou hadst broken down the bastille and fortresses of the low passions in thy soul, and given to thy spirit, what Franklin gave the earth, *i. e.* lightning-conductors, harmonica, and freedom; although thou didst find no kingdom so beautiful, and didst love to enlarge none so well, as the kingdom of truth; although

by the eunuch's philosophy of French encyclopedists, thou didst only let eternity but not divinity be concealed from thee,—only the belief in virtue, not the faith in thy own; yet did thy loving bosom receive nothing from friendship and humanity but the echoes of their sighs—the flute; and thy spirit, which, like the mahogany-tree, often broke asunder with its great roots the rock upon which it grew, in the fierce battle of thy wishes with thy doubts, in the battle of thy ideal world with the real one, and the one in which thou didst believe suffered a discord which no mild faith in a second softened to harmony; and therefore upon thy throne there was no place of rest, and there was none for thee but that which thou now hast.

Some men bring at once the whole of humanity before our eyes, as certain events bring our whole life before us. Upon Henry's breast fell strong splinters of the mountain, whose fall he heard.

He placed himself before the open grave, and delivered this speech, more to invisible than to visible hearers:

“The epitaph on the grave is, then, the *versio interlinearis* of our so small-printed life? There is no rest for the heart until it is set in gold,* like the head. Thou hidden Infinite One! make the grave for me the prompter's hole, and tell me what I am to think of the whole theatre! Indeed, what is there in the grave? A little ashes, a few worms, cold and night . . . by heaven! and above it, there is also nothing better, except that in addition one *feels* it. Mr. Schulrath, Time sits behind us, and reads the calendar of life so cursorily,

* A king's heart is enshrined in a golden case.

and turns over one month after the other so quickly, that I can picture to myself this grave, this moat here around our castles in the air, this fortress-dike, lengthened and extending up to my bed, and that I am shaken out of the sheet into this cooking-hole, as Spanish flies are shaken down and collected. 'Go on,' I would say, 'go on.' I shall either come to old Fred, or to his worms, and therewith *basta!* By heaven, one is ashamed of life, when the greatest men no longer possess it,—and so hallo!"

CHAPTER XXII.

Journey through Fantaisie. Reunion upon the Bindlocher Mountain. Berneck. Man-doubling. Gefrees. Exchange of Clothes. Münchberg. Pfeifstück. Hof. The Stone of Gladness, and Double Parting in Töpen.

HENRY now moved more wings than a seraphim, that he might the sooner be able to fly after his friend. He hastily packed up his writings, and addressed them to Vaduz. The sealed testament of the public notary was delivered over to the local authorities. The certificate of death was drawn up by the latter, in order that the Prussian Widow's Provident Fund Institution might see that it was not defrauded; and he then pushed off, after having bestowed some weighty grounds of consolation and some weighty ducats on the mock widow, who mourned in her striped calico gown, as was proper and becoming.

Let us now—earlier than he did himself—overtake and accompany his deceased friend. In the first hour of his night-walk, confused images of the past and future struggled in Firmian's heart; and it seemed as if for him there was no present, but that between the past and future all was a desert. However, the fresh, rich harvest-month of August soon restored to him his lost life; and when the bright morning came, the earth lay spread out before him softly illumined by a fallen thunder-storm, which now only cast more beautiful lightning-flashes out of the drops on the ears of corn, as though it were silvered by the moon. It was a new earth. He was a new man, who with full-fledged wings

had broken through the eggshell of the coffin. A broad, morass-like, overshadowed wilderness, in which he had been driven about by a long oppressive dream, had melted away, together with the dream; and now that he was awake, he saw far into the Eden. Long, long had the last week especially stretched out the winding ways of sorrow, which give to our little life the false appearance of too much length; in the same manner as by bendings and windings we give a deceptive extension to the short paths of a garden. On the other hand, his lighter bosom, relieved from its old burdens, was swelled by a great sigh, half sadly, half joyously. He had gone too far into the Trophonius-cavern of the grave, and had looked Death too near in the face; and it seemed to him, therefore, as if the country-houses, our pleasure-chateaux, and vineyards, were built and laid out too near the volcano of the grave-hillock with its crater, and that the next night would swallow them up. He alone seemed to have been saved, and to be a man returned from the dead: therefore every human face he met beamed upon him like that of a restored brother. "They are my brethren, whom I left on the earth," said his heart; and a fruitful love, warm as the spring, expanded all its fibres and veins, and it grew to every other heart, knitting it to its own by tender yet firm ivy-shoots. But the dearest remained absent from him too long. He therefore went on very slowly, in order that Leibgeber, of whom he was in advance, both as to road and time, might overtake him before he reached the town of Hof. A hundred times on his way he looked behind, almost involuntarily, to see if he were following and had already come up with him, as though it had been possible.

At last, on a morning when the world glistened from the dew-drop to the silvery cloud, he reached the Fantaisie of Baireuth. But all around was stillness; every breeze was silent, and August had no songsters, either in the shrubs or in the air. It seemed to him as if, separated from mortals, he were wandering through a second transfigured world, where the form of his Natalie might walk beside him with eyes of love and words of the heart, free and unshackled by the fetters of earth, and say to him: "Here you looked up thankfully to the starry night; here I gave you my wounded heart; here we pronounced our earthly separation; and here I was often alone, and pictured to myself the short apparition."

"But here," said he to himself, as he stood before the lovely chateau,—“here she wept for the last time in the beautiful valley on parting with her earliest friend.”

Now again it was she only who was transfigured, and he was abandoned upon the earth, and gazed upon her from below. He felt that he should see her no more in this world. "But," said he to himself, "men must love, even though they do not see each other." His whole meagre future would only be lighted by transfigured pictures; but as, according to Bonnet, the tree is planted in the air or heaven, as well as in the earth, and receives its nourishment from both, so is it with every true man in general; and so, too, Firmian lived, in future, more even than heretofore, but with less root-branches of self in the visible earth. The whole tree, with its branches and top, stood in the free atmosphere, and imbibed with its blossoms the air of heaven, where he had only one

invisible male and one invisible female friend to cheer him.

At length the beautiful thin vapour of his dreams condensed into fog. Natalie's grief at his death flashed before him; his loneliness oppressed his heart; and his bosom, made sore by love, longed inexpressibly for a living being to stand there and love him heartily; but this being followed, and sought to overtake him,—his Henry.

"Mr. Leibgeber!" suddenly exclaimed a voice behind him, "stop a moment! I have brought your pocket-handkerchief, which I found down below."

He looked round; and the same little girl whom Natalie had drawn out of the water ran to meet him with a white pocket-handkerchief. As he still possessed his own, and the little one looked at him with surprise, saying he had dropped it an hour ago in the basin, but he had not then had on such a long coat, a gush of joy streamed into his heart. Leibgeber had arrived, and had been below.

With hasty steps, and with the handkerchief in his hand, he hurried on to Baireuth. The handkerchief was moist, as if from the weeping eyes of his friend. He pressed it warmly upon his own, but he could no longer dry them with it, for he pictured to himself how Henry lived in solitude, and proved his own saying, "He who spares and puts armour upon his feelings, preserves them most sensitive; even as the most delicate and susceptible skin lies beneath the finger-nails."

In the hotel of the Sun he heard from the headwaiter, John, that Leibgeber had really arrived, and had left again half an hour ago. Right and left, blind

WER, FRUIT, AND THORN PIECES.

irmian hastened after him on the road to a tempestuous pursuit of his friend that yet handkerchief ceased to occupy his was late ere he beheld him ascending behind the village of Bindloch—a mountain—true sense of the word, upon which no e made, either up or down.

laboured up as fast as he was able, that undertake the Advocate unexpectedly before Hof, perhaps in Münchberg, or in Gefrees, ly in Berneck, which is only a few post-at from Baireuth.

not all to be ten times better? Did not when he was at the foot of the mountain, t last not far from the plain at the sum-out his name, though he heard it not? an with extraordinary rapidity, the hand-is hand, after his slow, mountain-tired did not the latter, on arriving at the and by chance to gaze over the sunny ad thence behold the whole of Baireuth, his pursuing friend? And did they not inst one another, the one up-hill, the ll, not like two hostile armies, but like sparkling cups of joy and friendship? on perceived that many harsh and melt-time past and future—were struggling ne bosom of his friend. He therefore ease and reconcile all the naiads of the “Every thing went off divinely, and every in health,” said he. “Now you are as your chains are knocked off; the world you; jump into it, then, fresh and mer-

rily, like me, and, for the first time in your life, begin really to live."

"You are right!" said Firmian. "I enjoy a meeting like that after death! Serene, still, and warm, reposes the heaven above us."

He had, therefore, not the courage to ask after those he had left behind him, especially the widow. Leibgeber expressed great joy that he had already overtaken him four posts on this side of Hof, which was the more agreeable to him since they could now accompany each other a good while ere they were obliged to part in Hof. This was said merely that he might introduce the parting, which was what he wanted to impress on the mind of his friend.

Now, in order to divert any expression of their mutual emotion, he began his jests upon the dying scenes, which continued, like mile-stones or stone-benches, all along the road to Hof, and which we must all take along with us on this journey, if we will not turn back. He asked him whether the diet, which he had given him in imitation of that which the old Germans, Romans, and Egyptians, gave their dead, had been sufficient. He confessed Firmian must be very pious, since scarcely had he put off the mortal before he arose from the dead; thereby confirming Lavater's doctrine of two resurrections—an earlier one for the pious, and a later one for the godless. "You could not have had a better Archimimus after your death* than myself; and every fly which I saw run about upon your hand was, in my eyes, an apologist of the Romans, who plainly perceived that the creature

* The Roman actor who at the funeral mimicked the dead man by his gestures.

had no business on the hand, and therefore posted a boy with a fly-whisk before every corpse—a practice which I sinfully omitted.”

Leibgeber’s spirit and body leaped rather than walked. “I am cheerful and free,” said he, “as long as I am out of doors: beneath the clouds I have no clouds. In youth the north-wind of life only blows upon one’s back; and, by heaven! I am younger than a reviewer.”

In Berneck they passed the night between the lofty bridge-piers of mountains, between which formerly flowed the seas which have overspread our sphere with fields. Grand and almighty reposed Time and Nature beside one another upon the confines of their two kingdoms. Between steep, lofty, monumental columns of creation, between firm, solid mountains, the empty mountain-castles crumbled into ruin; and masses of rock and blocks of stone lay strewn about the round green hills, as they were the broken tablets of the law of the first formation of the earth.

“The clergy from hence to Vaduz,” said Henry, on his entrance, “must not know that you have exchanged the temporal for the eternal, else they will demand the dues from you which every corpse has to pay in every parish through which it passes. If we were in ancient Rome, and not in Berneck,” added he, before the inn, “the landlord would not allow you to enter the house in any other way than through the chimney; and if it were in Athens, you would only need to creep through a hoop-petticoat, the same as if you wished to enter a spiritual office.”*

* Those who had been held for dead, and, as such, honoured with a burial, had to submit to both ceremonies: *Potter’s Archaeology*.

When he was in such a full flow of humour, he could never cease, which distinguished him, to his disadvantage, from myself; and he said it was with metaphors and similes as with gold pieces, of which, Rousseau asserts, it is more difficult to gain the first than the following thousand.

In the evening therefore it was out of his power not to have a conceit, when he beheld the Advocate cutting his nails. "I cannot understand," said he, "now that I see you do it, "why Catherine Vieri, whose nails had to be pared off two hundred and fifty years after her death, could not have performed the operation herself as well as you, now that you have given up the ghost." And when he saw him turn on his left side in bed, he merely observed, that the Advocate of the Poor made his bed rise and fall in the same way as John the Evangelist moves his bed of earth, the grave, even up to the present hour.*

On the morrow a little rain fell upon these flowers of humour. As Leibgeber was washing his lion-haired breast with cold water, the Advocate had seen him put aside a little key, and asked to what it belonged.

"It unlocks nothing," said he; "but it has locked the *plombé cenotaphium*."**

Firmian was obliged to lean out of the window, and dry his eyes unobserved. He then said: "Give me the key: it is the waxen impression of a future one. I will make it the tuning-key of my inner tones, and will hang it up and look at it daily; and when,

* Augustin, *Commentar. ad Johan. xxi. 23.*

** Thus, or *tumulus honorarius*, was called the *empty* monument, which friends erected to the memory of a dead person whose body could not be found.

perchance, my resolution to improve shall have run down, I will wind it up again with this watch-key."

He obtained it. Hereupon Leibgeber happened to look into the mirror. "It almost seems as if I beheld myself double, if not treble," said he: "one of me must have died—the one there within, or the one outside. Which of us, then, in this room, is dead, and appears afterwards to the other? or do we only appear to ourselves? Eh! you my three I's, what do you say to the fourth?" demanded he; and turning to their two images in the mirror, and then to Firmian, he said, "Here am I too."

There was something terrible for the future* in these words; and Firmian, whose cooler understanding, in the midst of his emotion, made him fear the dangerous growth of this metamorphosing self-reflection in the solitude of travel, said, with tender anxiety: "Dear Henry, if upon your eternal journeys you always remain in future so lonely, I fear it will injure you. Even God himself is not alone, but beholds his universe."

"I can always be treble," answered he, strangely moved by the coffin-key, "even in the greatest solitude, not to take into account the universe;" and he stepped before the mirror, and pressed his eye-ball aside with his fore-finger, so that he could see a two-fold image of himself. "But you, indeed, cannot see the third person in there. However," continued he, somewhat more cheerfully, in order to dissipate the clouds from his friend, who was little comforted by his last speech, and he led him, at the same time, to the window,—

* In another novel of the author, *Titan*, Leibgeber becomes deranged.
—Tr.

"It is still better in the street below; and I there have much more company. I put my fore-finger to my eyeball, and I have immediately the twin of every one, whosoever he may be, and a double edition of every landlord, as well as of his chalk. No president walks to the assembly to whom I do not give his ourang-outang, and they go before me *tête-à-tête*. If a genius wants an imitator, I take my fore-finger, and a living fac-simile is created on the spot. With every co-operator works a co-operator—adjunct professors are adjoined to adjunct professors—duplicates are given to only sons; for, as you see, I carry my plastic nature, my stamen, my moulding instrument, the fore-finger, with me; and I seldom let a solo-dancer caper otherwise than with four legs, so that he must dangle in the air as a pair of men. But you cannot conceive how much I gain by thus grouping a single fellow and his limbs. Consider, lastly, the increase of the multitude, when I double the number of all who attend funeral processions—strengthen every regiment by a regiment of flugelmen, who all imitate each other's motions—for, as I have said, like a grasshopper, I have the egg-depositing trunk always along with me,—the finger. From all this, Firmian, you may draw the consolatory conclusion, that I enjoy more society than any of you, namely, twice as much; and besides, it consists of people who, aping themselves in all their gestures, afford me a cheap delight by their laughable appearance."

Hereupon they looked one another in the face, but full of affectionate sympathy, and without any unpleasant feeling left by the preceding wild mode of jesting. A third person would have been frightened at their resemblance in this hour, as each was the plaster-of-paris

cast of the other; but to themselves their mutual affection made their faces appear dissimilar: each beheld in the other only what he loved as foreign to himself; and it was the same with their features as with beautiful actions, which inspire us with emotion and admiration in others, but not in ourselves.

When they were again out of doors, travelling on the road to Gefrees, the coffin-key, together with their previous discourse, continually pictured to their minds their last parting, whose death-sickle, with every milestone, approached nearer. Henry, therefore, sought to throw a few rosy beams into Firmian's fog by delivering into his hands an exact protocol of all the daily duties which had been agreed upon between him and the Count of Vaduz.

"It is true, the Count would merely suppose that you had forgotten the conversation; however, it is better so. You have killed yourself like a negro slave, in order to become free and arrive at the gold coast of your silver coast; and it would indeed be damnable if, after your death, you were to be damned."

"I cannot thank you sufficiently," said Firmian; "but you should not render my task still more difficult, and retire, like a hand from the clouds, as soon as you have emptied your own. Tell me, why am I not to see you any more after our parting?"

"In the first place," answered he quietly, "because the public, the Count, the Widow's Provident Fund Institution, and your widow, might discover that two editions of me were extant, which would be a most terrible misfortune in a world where a person is scarcely allowed to sit and sleep *solo* in the first original edition; secondly, I intend to act upon the fool's ship of the

earth several of the clown's parts, which I am not ashamed of so long as not a single devil knows who I am. Ah, I could give you many more weighty reasons! Moreover, it is pleasant to me to cast myself down from the moon upon the earth, and unknown, severed, unshackled, mingle with mankind as a freak of Nature, a *diabolus ex machina*, a strange moon *lithopædium*. Firmian, it is settled. After some years I will perhaps send you a line or two; the rather as the Galatians* put letters addressed to the dead upon the funeral pyre, just as if they were putting them into the post. But now it is decided—*positively*."

"I would not so easily submit," said Siebenkäs, "had I not the presentiment that I shall soon see you again. I am not like you; I hope for two meetings, one below—one above. Would to God that I could get you to die as you did me, and that we afterwards met again upon a Bindlocher mountain, but remained longer together!"

If these wishes should remind the reader of Schoppe in Titan, he will consider in what sense Destiny often interprets and fulfils our wishes.

Leibgeber merely answered: "We must be able to love without seeing one another; and in the end we can only love Love, and that we can both see, daily, in ourselves."

In the inn at Gefrees, as they had plenty of leisure, considering there was nothing to be seen either in or out of the town with its one street, Leibgeber proposed exchanging clothes, in order (this was the good reason he alleged) that the Count of Vaduz, who for years had never seen him in any other dress than the

* Alexand. ab Alex. III. 7.

present, might not perceive any thing in the Advocate to surprise him, but might find every thing exactly as before, even to the shoe-heel with its nails. This fell upon the Advocate's bosom like a broad beam of February sun-shine, that is to say, the thought that in future he should be embraced, as it were, by Henry's sleeves, and clasped and warmed by all his outer relics. Leibgeber retired into the next room, and first threw his short green jacket through the half-open door, calling out, "Frock-coat, come in;" then, after the neckcloth and waistcoat, he threw in his long trousers with leathern stripes, saying, "Short ones, come in;" and, at last, even his shirt, with the words, "Grave-shirt, hither."

The throwing in of the shirt at once afforded the Advocate the clue to Leibgeber's secret feelings. He guessed that he had a higher motive for this transmigration into clothes than merely that of providing an actor's dress for Vaduz, namely, the desire of inhabiting the case or shell which had contained his friend. Not in a whole volume of Gellert or Klopstock's "Letters upon Friendship," not in a whole weekful of Leibgeber's days of self-denial, was there any thing so dear and sweet to the Advocate as this inheritance of clothes. He would not profane the surmise that made him so happy by expressing it; but he was confirmed in his belief when Leibgeber came forth, changed into a Siebenkäs, and, after gazing upon himself with gentle looks in the mirror, laid his three fingers without speaking a word upon Firmian's forehead. This was the greatest sign of his love; and therefore, to my own and Firmian's joy, I mention, that during dinner, though the conversation was about indifferent things, he re-

peated the sign more than three times. How different and various would have been the jests which Leibgeber would have made upon this moulting at any other season, under the influence of other feelings! Only to guess at a few of them: how much use he would have made of the change of binding of their two folio volumes, in order to involve Mr. Hochmüller (the landlord in Gefrees) in the greatest and most amusing embarrassment, from which the polite man could not have extricated himself one minute earlier than until the fourth volume had come to his assistance, which, at the present moment, is only in Baireuth, and not yet in the press. But Leibgeber did nothing of all this; and even of conceits he only delivered himself of a few weak ones, about changelings, and about the sudden French transition of people from "*en longue robe*" to "*en courte robe*;" and he also said, that he would no longer call Siebenkäs a deceased, transfigured being in boots, but in shoes, which was more fitting, and sounded somewhat more sublime.

He observed with particular pleasure, that, what between the old bodies and new clothes, as it were, between two fires of love, his dog Saufinder did not know what to make of it, but often turned away quite puzzled from one to the other: the agreement between the two parties, the clipping of the one, the increase of the other, mystified the poor animal, and he could not comprehend it.

"I value him as much again," said Leibgeber, "for his behaviour to you; believe me, he will not be at all unfaithful to me if he is faithful to you."

He could scarcely say any thing more obliging to the Advocate. The whole way from Gefrees to Münch-

berg, the Advocate, from a feeling of gratitude, exerted himself to reflect upon his friend the sunshine of cheerfulness, into which Henry continually sought to lead him. This was not easy, especially when he beheld his friend trudging after him in his long coat. He made the greatest efforts in Münchberg, the last post-station before Hof, where the corporeal arms by which they clung together were, so to say, to be cut off by a long separation.

As they were proceeding along the road of Hof, more silent than before, Leibgeber, who was in advance, and felt revived by the pine-wood mountain on his right, began to whistle, as was his wont when travelling, gay and sad national airs, most of them in a low key. He said, he did not consider himself the worst city and road piper, and he thought he bore the innate foot-passenger's post-horn with honour. But now, so shortly before parting, these sounds, which seemed to come echoing from Henry's long journeys in former times, and to meet him from his future solitary ones, fell upon Firmian's ear as a kind of Swiss *Ranz-des-vaches*, which penetrated to his heart; and it was fortunate that he was behind, for he could not possibly restrain his tears. Oh, take away music, when the heart is full, if it is not to overflow!

At last he was enabled to give sufficient steadiness to his voice to ask in an unembarrassed tone: "Are you fond of whistling, and do you often do so on the road?"

There was, however, something in the tone of the question which conveyed the idea that the fluting was not so agreeable to him as to the musician himself.

"Always," answered Leibgeber, "I whistle life out; the theatre of the world and all that is upon it, and so forth; much of the past; and, like a steeple-warder of Carlsbad, I also blow in the future. But it displeases you, perhaps? Do I blow false, or whistle against rule?"

"Oh," said Siebenkäs, "only too beautifully!"

Thereupon Leibgeber began again, but with ten times more force and beauty than before, and performed such a lovely, melting mouth-organ piece, that Siebenkäs came up to him with four large strides, and laying his right-hand gently on Henry's lips, while he covered his own streaming eyes with the handkerchief in his left, he said to him in a quivering voice, "Henry, spare me! I know not why, but to-day every tone moves me too much."

The musician looked at him. Leibgeber's whole inner world was in his eye-ball; he then nodded his head several times, and walked rapidly forwards without uttering a word, or turning to look back or to be looked upon. But his hands, perhaps involuntarily, continued to beat time to some bars of the air.

At length they reached the Grub-street or city of the mint, where I sit pasting and colouring these assignats* for half the world, *i. e.* Hof. It is true it is not at all to my advantage that I then knew nothing whatever of all that, at present, half Europe is made acquainted with through me. I was then younger, and sat solitary at home, like a lettuce, with the best will to close into a head, which act of closing nothing hinders so much, both in men and in lettuces, as the

* I am talking of the year 1796.

proximity and touch of the neighbouring plants. It is easier, more agreeable, and more advantageous for a youth to come forth out of solitude into company, (out of the greenhouse into the garden,) than, *vice versa*, out of the market-place into a corner. Exclusive solitude and exclusive sociality are both injurious, and, with the exception of their order of precedence, nothing is so important as their interchange.

In Hof, Siebenkäs bespoke two rooms of the landlord, believing that Leibgeber would not part from him before the following morning. But the latter, who for some time had been vexed at his own predetermination to part, and then at his fear of it, had inwardly sworn to make the rent between two spirits this very day, and afterwards to run away into the Saxon territory, even if it were at three quarters past eleven at night—but, any rate, to-day. He entered his chamber good-humouredly, unbolted the door that divided it from that of Siebenkäs, and thought of the melodies he had whistled, which still rang in his and the Advocate's head if not in their hearts; but he soon enticed him out of the empty, deaf and dumb chamber into the distracting hurly-burly of the coffee-room; did not remain long even there, but begged his friend to cruise with him round the town, just as the first quarter of the moon stood like a burning lamp above its post on the market-place. They both sallied forth, climbed up to the avenue, and looked down upon the gardens of Hof in the city-moat, which perhaps deserve to supersede artificial meadows, since more frequently than other meadows they are sown for cattle. To this I ascribe the observation made so late at night by Leibgeber, who had been in Switzerland

(for the country adorned and adopted by nature, and disinherited by art, lay stretched out before him), that the inhabitants of Hof resembled the Swiss, whose whole country was an English garden, with the exception of the few gardens in it.

The two continued to describe more extended parallels around the town. They crossed a bridge whence they perceived a grass-grown Rabenstein, which reminded them of that other icy region with its crater, where just a year ago they had parted in the night, but with the sweeter hope of an earlier meeting. Two friends such as these, in similar situations have always similar thoughts. Each, if not the unison, is at least the octave, the fifth, the fourth, of the other. Henry sought to kindle a little light in his friend's dark house of mourning and sorrow, by directing his attention to the bird-pole, which stood like a commandant's flag-staff, or like the burning-stake not far from the place of criminal judicature.

"A king of the shooters," he observed, "has here, alongside of the lever and leaping-pole by which you swung yourself up to be great Negus and great Mogul of Kuhschnappel, his criminal Sinai most conveniently at hand, upon which he can both give his laws and avenge them."

The law of nature by which, according to Buffon, opposite every hill is always found a second of equal height and bulk, comprehends many corresponding heights: for instance, here Rabenstein and throne, in large cities great houses and *petites maisons*, the two choirs in the churches, the fifth story and Pindus, theatres and Professors' chairs.

Since Firmian, lost in sadder resemblances, re-

mained silent, he too spoke no more. He now conducted him (for he was acquainted with the whole country) towards another stone which had a more beautiful name—to the stone of gladness. While they were toiling to it up the mountain, Firmian at length asked him boldly:

“Tell me—I am resigned to it—tell me openly, upon your honour, when do you intend leaving me for ever?”

“*Now*,” answered Henry.

Under pretence of more easily ascending the acclivity, which was clothed with blooming, fragrant mountain-herbs, they held such other's hands, and during the toil of the ascent both were squeezed apparently by a mechanical accident. But the roots of sorrow penetrating into Firmian's heart grew with every moment larger, and split it further asunder, even as roots split rocks. Firmian threw himself down upon the grey craggy promontory, which stood isolated on the green height like a boundary-stone, but at the same time he drew his parting brother to his bosom.

“Sit once more quite close beside me,” said he.

They pointed out to one another, as friends are wont to do, every thing they observed. Henry directed his attention to the camp of the town, pitched at the base of the mountain, in which nothing was moving but the flickering lights. The river coiled round the town beneath the moon like a giant serpent with a sparkling back, and stretched itself out betwixt two bridges. The pale light of the half-moon, and the white transparent mists of night, raised the mountains, and woods, and earth, into the heavens, and the

waters upon the earth were spangled with stars like the blue night above them, and the earth, as well as Uranus, had a double moon, as it were a child in each hand.

"In fact," commenced Leibgeber, "we can always see one another when we please; we have only to look into a common mirror—that is, our moon-mirror."*

"No," said Firmian, "we will agree upon a time when we will think of one another at the same moment, on our birthdays, on the day of my pantomimic death, and on this day."

"Good," said Leibgeber; "those shall be our four quarter-days."

All at once his hand happened to come in contact with a dead lark, which had probably been killed by the hail. Suddenly he grasped Firmian by the shoulder, and said, as he pulled him up:

"Stand up; we are men! What is the use of all this! Farewell! May God crush me with a thousand thunder-bolts if you ever go out of my head or heart. You will remain for ever in my bosom as warmly as a living heart; and so farewell: and upon the Berghem's sea-piece of your life may there be no wave as big as a tear! Farewell!"

They clung together and wept heartily, and Firmian as yet returned no answer. His fingers stroked and caressed Henry's hair. At last he leaned his cheek

* Pythagoras invented a means by which every thing that he wrote upon a mirror with bean-juice became legible in the moon: *Carl. Rhodigin.* xi. 13. When Charles V. and Francis I. were waging war with each other to obtain possession of Milan, every thing that happened in the day at Milan could, by means of such a mirror, easily be read on the moon at night in Paris: Agrippa *De Occul. Philos.* 11. 6.

only against the beloved eyes,—before his own beamed the wide abyss of night; and his lips, which were turned away from the parting kiss, murmured almost inaudibly, “Farewell, sayest thou to me? Ah! that, indeed, I cannot, when I have lost my truest, my oldest friend. The earth henceforth will be as dark to me as it now is around us. It will be hard for me one day in death, when in my darkness I stretch out my hand to feel for you, and think in my delirium that death is again only simulated as before, and I say, ‘Henry, close my eyes,—I cannot die without thee.’”

They remained silent in a convulsive embrace. Henry whispered, “Ask me what you still wish me to say to you; then may God punish me if I utter another word.”

Firmian stammered out, “Will you still continue to love me, and shall I soon see you again?”

“Not for a long time,” answered he; “and I shall love you unceasingly.”

As he endeavoured to tear himself away, Firmian held him fast. “We will look at one another only once more,” entreated he; and they bent back, with their faces channelled by sorrow, and looked at one another for the last time, as the night-wind, like the arm of a stream, mingled with the deep river, and both, united, murmured along in larger billows, and as the wide mountains of creation trembled beneath the dim radiance of tearful eyes. But Henry tore himself away, made a motion with his hand, as if to say it was all over, and fled *down* the mountain.

After a short time the spur of pain impelled Firmian unconsciously to follow him, and his inner man, com-

pressed to insensibility by the tourniquet, did not at this moment feel the amputation of his limb. They both pursued the same road, though separated by mountains and valleys. As often as Henry stood still and looked back, Firmian did the same. Ah! after such a sultry storm, every wave freezes to an icy ridge, and the heart lies transpierced upon them. Did it not seem to our Firmian, whilst with this broken heart he traversed the undistinguishable dusky paths, as if all the funeral bells were tolling behind him,—as if life were flying away from him? and when, in relief against the blue sky, he beheld a black storm-tree* which rested on the stars like a bier for the future, was it not natural that a voice should exclaim within him, “With this foot-rule of vapour destiny measures you, your earth and your love, for the last coffin?” From the distance never varying between himself and the form he had observed, Henry at length became aware that it was following him, and only halted when he halted. He, therefore, resolved to wait in the next village, where his stopping would not be perceived, for the shape that was creeping after him. In the next village, Töpen, which was situated deep in the valley, he awaited the arrival of the pursuing undistinguishable being in the deep shadow of a gleaming church. Firmian hastened along the broad white road, stupified by sorrow and blinded by the moonlight, and paused near the friend he had parted from. They stood opposite one another, like two spirits over their corpses, and each deemed the other an apparition, as the superstitious believe the noises made by those who are buried alive to proceed from ghosts. Firmian hesitated, fearing that his be-

* A long cloud with streaks like branches, which announces a storm.

loved friend would be displeased, and from afar he lifted up his trembling arm and stammered forth, "It is I, Henry," and went towards him. Henry uttered a cry of sorrow, and threw himself upon the faithful bosom, but his oath chained his tongue, and thus the two wretched or blessed beings, mute, blind, and weeping, pressed their two throbbing hearts once more closely together; and when the speechless moment, full of anguish and rapture, was past, an iron cold one tore them asunder, and Fate seized them with two almighty arms, and flung the one bleeding heart to the south, the other to the north, and the dejected silent corpses pursued slowly and solitarily the widening path of separation in the night.

And why, then, does my own heart break,—why, long before I came to this parting, could I no more staunch my overflowing eyes? Oh, my good Christian, it is not because in this church those now rest and decay who once lay upon thy heart and mine!—no, no, I have become used to it now, in the black magic of our life, to see skeletons suddenly spring up in the place of our friends. I know that *one* must die when two embrace;*—that an unknown breath blows the thin glass which we call a human bosom, and that an unknown cry again breaks the glass. It is no longer so painful to me as it once was, ye two brothers sleeping in the church!—that the hard, cold hand of death struck you away so early from the honey-dew of life, and that you expanded your wings and disappeared. Oh, ye have either a sounder sleep, or more friendly dreams, or a brighter waking than ours! But that

* The superstition is that of two children who kiss without being able to speak—the one must die.

which agonises us in every gravehillock is the thought, "Ah! how much I would have loved thee, good heart, had I but known thy death beforehand!" But as not one of us can take the hand of a corpse, and say, "Thou pale image, I have at least sweetened thy fleeting life; I never gave thy faded heart any thing but pure love, pure joy;" as we all, when at length Time, Sorrow, and Life's winter without love have beautified our hearts, must step with useless sighs up to the forms that lie overwhelmed by the earth-fall of the grave, and say, "Alas, that I can no longer possess you and love you, now that I am better and gentler! Alas, that the good bosom is now hollow and broken in, and no longer contains a heart which I would now love better, and gladden more than before!"—what is left to us but a vain sorrow, a dumb repentance, and unceasing bitter tears? No, my Christian, something better is left us—a warmer, truer, more beautiful love towards every soul that we have not yet lost!

CHAPTER XXIII.

Days at Vaduz. Natalie's Letter. A New Year's Wish. Wilderness of
Destiny and of the Heart.

WE meet our Firmian again, who, after his departure from the world, like officers after theirs, had risen to a higher grade, that is to say, to the rank of an Inspector, in his inspector's dwelling at Vaduz. He was now obliged to force his way through so many tangled holly-brakes and thorny hedges, that, amid his labours, he forgot he was so alone, so quite alone in the world. No man could overcome and endure solitude if he did not cherish the hope of a social circle in the future, or the imagination of an invisible one in the present.

In his intercourse with the Count he had only to appear what he was, and then he most resembled Leibgeber. He found in him an old man of the world, who, living alone, without wife and sons or female domestics, covered and adorned his grey hairs with the arts and sciences, the longest and latest enjoyments of a joy-exhausted existence. He loved nothing else on the earth (always excepting the act of joking upon it) but his daughter, with whom Natalie had wandered and revelled among the stars and blossoms of her youthful days.

As he had exerted all his powers of soul and body in his earlier days to climb and carry off the prizes

from the highest and most slippery *cocagne**-trees of pleasure, it was natural enough that he should come down from them with both elements of his being somewhat faint and exhausted. His mental life was now a sort of nursing and lying in a tepid bath, from which he could never rise without a cold fit of shivering, and into which fresh warm water had continually to be poured. The keeping of his word, which with him was a point of honour, and the greatest happiness of his daughter, were the only unbroken reins by which the moral law had ever restrained him; for he looked upon all its other bonds more in the light of flower-chains or pearl-strings, which a man of the world ties together again so often in the course of his life.

As it is easier to simulate lameness than an upright carriage, it was consequently less difficult for Siebenkäs to act the part of the dear lame devil, his Leibgeber. The Count was only struck by the natural white paint upon his face, by his sorrowful countenance, and by a number of inexpressible little deviations, variations, and aberrations from Leibgeber; but the Inspector helped his liege out of his dream by remarking, that he hardly knew himself any longer, and that he had become his own changeling ever since he had been ill, and had seen his college-friend Siebenkäs depart this life in Kuhschnappel. In short, the Count was obliged to believe what he heard: who could ever dream of such an absurd story as that which I here narrate? Even if my reader had then stood by in the room, he must still have believed the Inspector rather than myself, were it only that the Inspector re-

* "*Mât de cocagne*,"—a smooth high mast, at the top of which are prizes for successful climbers.—*Tr.*

collected more of his former conversation with the Count—it was true, he learnt it from Leibgeber's journal—than did the Count himself. However, since he had to act the part of man of business and feoffee of his beloved Henry, he was obliged to exhibit two qualities in a high degree—cheerfulness and good temper. Leibgeber's humour was stronger in colouring, bolder in drawing, and had a more poetical, universal, and ideal compass* than that of Firmian; therefore the latter was obliged to raise his chamber-voice into a choir-voice, in order to imitate him at least, if not to come up to him. And this appearance of a cheerful humour changed at last into a real one. In consequence, too, of his fine feeling and his friendship, Henry's magnified, bright image, upon whose head the halo of beams intertwined with the laurel-wreath, was always borne before him on his path of life, as upon a Moses-pillar of clouds, and every thought in him whispered, "Be glorious, be divine, be a Socrates, if only to do honour to the spirit whose emissary thou art." And to which of us would it be possible to take the name of a beloved person, and, under this name, to be guilty of sin?

No one in the world is so often cheated—not even

* "Therefore I foresee that Leibgeber's pastoral letters in these 'Flower-Pieces' will be unendurable letters of defiance and challenge for most of my readers. Most of the Germans—this cannot be denied them—understand a joke, not all understand raillery, and very few humour, least of all such as that of Leibgeber. Considering, therefore, that it was easier to change a book than the public, my first intention was to have falsified all his letters, and to have substituted more intelligible ones. However, it can always be so arranged, in the second edition, that the counterfeit letters shall be inserted into the text, and the real ones subjoined as an appendix." This was not rendered necessary: but, heavens! how can first editions make such egregious blunders, and mis-estimate so many readers, to whom second editions afterwards make the sincerest and warmest acknowledgments?

women and princes—as the conscience. The Inspector deluded his in some such manner as this: “In earlier years his name had really been Leibgeber, just as he now signed himself; he also assisted the Count enough. Besides, could any one be more resolved than he was to relate every thing to the latter exactly as it happened, even to a hair, as soon as it was in his power? It was easy to foresee that such a humorous juridical forging, and such a picturesque deception, would surprise him more agreeably than all the necessary truths founded on reason and *responsa prudentum*; not to mention the Count’s joy when he discovered that the same friend, and humorist, and jurist, was to be had two-headed, two-hearted, four-legged, and four-armed, in short, *in duplo*. He must also observe that his lies were more those of necessity than lies in jest; inasmuch as he touched upon the past conversations and circumstances of Leibgeber most unwillingly and as seldom as possible; whereas he spoke more freely and more frequently about his own immediate affairs, which excluded no truth.”

So is, *not* the Inspector, but *man*. The latter has an indescribable love of halves—perhaps because he is a colossus standing with outstretched legs upon two worlds—namely, of half romances—of the half “franco” of selfishness—of half proofs—of half learning—of half holydays—of hemispheres—and consequently of better halves.

During the first weeks his new labours, of every sort, concealed from him his sorrows and his longings, at least as long as the sun shone. The first addition to his pleasure, however, was made by the Count’s satisfaction with his juridical knowledge and punctual

labours. The latter once even said to him, "Friend Leibgeber, you keep your previous promise bravely. Your insight and punctuality in business is an additional honour to you; for I confess freely that, with all my respect for your other talents, I had some unpleasant misgivings on this head: for, like your Frederick II., I separate business altogether from conversation; to all that respects the former I exact the most scrupulous and punctual attention."

Thereupon Firmian thought and rejoiced within himself—"Thus far, at least, I have turned aside some blame from my dear friend, and acquired some praise for him, which, had he pleased, he could easily have acquired for himself."

After such a pleasure of self-denial, a man always desires to enjoy new pleasures of self-denial and to make new sacrifices; like children, who, after having once given, will never cease giving. He unpacked his selection from the Devil's Papers, and gave them to the Count, saying quite openly, that he had composed them. "In this I do not deceive him in the least," thought he, "notwithstanding that he ascribes them to Leibgeber; for I have now no other name."

The Count could not read and praise the papers enough; and, what particularly pleased him was, the true zeal shewed by the author in allowing himself to be directed in the right path of satire by his two countrymen, the British twin-constellation of humour, Swift and Sterne.

Siebenkäs heard his book praised with so much pleasure, and smiled with such delight, that he really looked like a vain author, while, in fact, he was nothing but a lover of his Henry, upon whose name and

form, in the Count's soul, he had been able to conjure a few more laurel-crowns.

But this little pleasure was indeed needful, as some consolation and cordial for a life which, cold and overshadowed, flowed on from week to week, from month to month, between steep shores of piled-up acts and documents. Alas! he heard nothing better, with the exception only of the good Count, whose extraordinary kindness would have made his heart beat still more warmly had he but been able to thank him for it both in his own and in another's name—he heard nothing better, I say, than the waves of his life, which sometimes murmured. He again found himself daily in the hard position of a critic, which he had been before—obliged to read what he had to criticise—formerly authors, now advocates. He looked into so many empty heads—into so many empty hearts; in the former he beheld so much folly, in the latter so much blackness. He perceived how much the common people, when travelling to the Egerian fountain of juridical inkstands to cure themselves of bladder-stones, resembled the frequenters of Carlsbad, in whom the hot spring brings out all the hidden diseased matter upon the surface of the skin. He saw that most of the old and worst advocates, in this one respect only, bore a beautiful resemblance to poisonous plants, that, like them, they are not half so poisonous in their youth and period of bloom, but, on the contrary, much more harmless. He saw that a just judgment was often as injurious as an unjust one, and that appeals were made against both. He saw that it was an easier, and, at the same time, more unpleasant thing, to be a judge than to be an advocate, but that neither of them were

losers by an injustice; since the judge was as well paid for a judgment set aside as an advocate for a lost lawsuit; and that they therefore lived as comfortably upon the fall of justice as Schaffhausen upon the fall of the Rhine; that, in the treatment of dependents, the principle of grooms was applied, who consider the curry-combing half the horse's food; and lastly, he saw that no one was more ill-used in the affair than he who witnessed it, and that the devil never carried off any thing less frequently than—devils.

Amid such labours and views the tender veins of the heart contract, and the open arms of the inner man are paralysed. The overburdened man scarcely has the desire to love, far less the time. We always love and seek *things* at the expense of *persons*; and the man who *works* too much must *love* too little.

Poor Firmian listened each day to the prayers and wishes of his tender soul on one single spot alone, namely, upon his pillow, and the pillow-case was his white handkerchief, waiting for his wet eyes. Over the whole of his former world rolled a deluge of tears, and nothing floated above it but the two faded funereal chaplets of departed days, Natalie's and Lenette's flowers—the petrified medicinal flowers, as it were, of his sick soul—the border-plants of desolated beds.

Living, as he did, so far away, and not in any corner of the elliptical vault, he could learn as little of the imperial market-town as of Schraplau—of Lenette and Natalie nothing. He merely saw in the Messenger of the Gods and Advertiser of German Programmes that he had died, and that the critical institution thereby found itself deprived of one of its best and most diligent co-operators, which *necrologium* rewarded

the Inspector earlier than any German scholar, and not later than the Olympian conqueror Euthymus,* to whom, by a decree of the Delphic oracle, sacrifice and divine worship were adjudged even during his lifetime. I know not to what ears the German Fama most loves to blow her trumpet—whether to deaf ears or to long ones.

And yet Firmian preserved, in the ice-mouth of his heart, that so yearned for love, and in the wilderness of his solitude, one living, blooming flower, and this was, Natalie's parting kiss.

Oh! if ye but knew—ye who suffer an unceasing hunger because of our insatiableness—how a kiss which is a first and a last one blooms throughout a whole life, as the everlasting double rose of the silent lips and glowing souls, ye would seek and find longer joys. That kiss established in Firmian the spirit-bond, and eternalised love in its season of blossoming; the silent lips still continued to speak to him; the spirit's inspiration was wafted still from breath to breath; and however often in his nights, from behind his closed eyes, he let Natalie part from him with her sublime sorrows, and disappear in the dark shrubbery-paths, he was yet never tired of the parting, of the sorrows, and of the love.

At last, after the lapse of six months, on a lovely winter's morning, when the white mountains, with their snowy crystal woods, were bathing, as it were, in the rose-blood of the sun, and when the wings of aurora, more widely expanded, laid themselves upon the sparkling earth, a letter flew into Firmian's empty hand, as if wafted in advance by the morning wind of a future

* Plin. H. N. vii. 48.

spring. It was from Natalie, who, like every one else, supposed him to be the Henry of former days.

"Dear Leibgeber,—I can no longer control my heart, which has daily yearned to melt or break before yours, only that it might disclose to you all its wounds. Once at least you were my friend: am I quite forgotten? Have I lost you too? Oh, surely not! It is only that you cannot speak to me for sorrow, because your Firmian died upon your heart, and still reposes in the cold of death upon the aching spot. Oh, why did you persuade me to accept fruits which grow upon his grave, and which, as it were, will open his coffin for me every year?* The first day I received them was a sad one—sadder than any before. You will perceive in a little new-year's wish, addressed to myself, which I enclose, that one passage refers to a white rose-tree in my room from which I gathered a few white roses in December. My friend, now attend to a request, which is the motive of my writing this letter—it is my warmest prayer for sorrow, for still greater sorrow; then I shall have consolation. Send me—since no one else can, and I know nobody—a circumstantial detail of the last hours and minutes of our beloved friend; tell me what he said, what he suffered, how his eye became glazed, and how his life ceased; I must learn all, every thing that will pierce me to the heart. What can it cost you and me but tears? and they refresh a sick eye. I am your friend

"NATALIE.

"P. S. Were I not restrained by so many circum-

* Refers to the widow's pension.

stances, I would make a pilgrimage to his place of residence in person, and collect relics for my soul; although I will not answer for any thing if you are silent. I congratulate you upon your new appointment, and I hope to be able to do so some day by word of mouth. My heart will at length so far heal as to enable me to visit my dear friend at her father's house, and to see you without too much pain at the resemblance which you bear to your now *unlike* buried beloved friend."

The pretty poem was in English verse, as follows:

"The new year opens wide its gate:
Between the redly rising sun
And morning vapours standeth Fate,
And hath the new year's task begun.

He stands upon the dead year's tomb,
The days obedient round him bow,
To scatter light, to scatter gloom;
Say, Natalie, what prayest thou?

Oh, not for joys; alas! their bloom,
That in my heart no home could find,
A moment shed a sweet perfume,
Then died, and left their thorns behind.

Where sheds the sun his warmest beam,
The heavy thunder-cloud doth grow;
Our light is nothing but the gleam
Cast from the sword of coming woe.

Oh no! I ask for joys no more;
They make the thirsting heart so drear,
With tears alone it floweth o'er,
For nought but sorrow fills it here.

Oh, Natalie, consider still—

All coming Time to Fate doth bow;—
He gives the good—he gives the ill—
'Tis thine to ask. What wishest thou?

I ask no love; for whoso presses
Upon his heart love's fair white rose
Is wounded e'en while he caresses,
And never more those wounds will close.

The life-warm tear of joy, which threw
Upon its cup a brighter dye,
Too soon grows cold, and then, like dew,
It melts away into a sigh.

At dawn of life, in beauty proud,
Fair as Aurora, love appears;
Oh, enter not the radiant cloud,
For it is built of mist and tears!

Ah, no! no love, no love for me;
Of nobler sorrows I would die,
Beneath a loftier poison-tree
Than the low myrtle gasping lie.

Almighty Lord of all is Fate—
Thou kneelest at his footstool now—
Oh speak to him, ere yet too late,
Say, Natalie, what wishest thou?

Not e'en for friends—no more; we stand
All side by side o'er hollow graves,
And when together, hand in hand,
Our mutual love life's sorrow braves,

Behold, the treacherous vault gives way,
And claims the loved one for its own;
And I with frozen days must stay
Above the filled-up pit—alone.

No, no, not here; but when the breast
Is wed to stern decay no more;
When friends shall meet in cloudless rest
Upon the everlasting shore;

Then shall my heart more warmly beat,
More gladly weep the unfading eye;
The lips that cannot pale repeat
The words of love, and breathe its sigh:

'Oh, come to me, beloved soul,
To-day we'll love without a fear,
Nor seek our rapture to control—
There is no death to part us here.'

Has Earth then nothing—nothing left
To lift the shadow from thy brow?
Oh thou—forsaken and bereft,
Bethink thee yet; what wishest thou?

For patience and the grave—deny,
O silent Fate, not that; first take
The tears away, then close the eye;
First soothe the heart, then let it break.

Once when beneath a lovelier sky
The spirit spreads its buoyant wing;
When in a purer world on high
The new year dawns, new joys to bring;

When all shall meet and love again,
Then shall my wishes be confess'd;
Yet no—e'en then I must refrain;
I should already be too blest."

What language could depict the internal speechlessness and stupefaction of her friend after he had read the paper? He still held it, and gazed upon it, though he could no longer either see or think. Alas! the icebergs of the glacier of death advanced further, and filled up one warm *Tempe* after another!

The only bond by which Firmian, in his loneliness, was now attached to humanity was the rope which tolled his death-knell and let down his coffin. His bed was nothing but a broad bier; and if ever he had

a moment of joy, it seemed to him as if he committed a robbery on the withered leaf-stripped heart of another. The stem of his life, like that of many plants,* sank continually lower, and its top became the hidden root.

On all sides yawned the abyss of a difficulty; and action was as dangerous as inaction. I will lay before the reader the difficulties or resolutions, in the order they presented themselves to his soul. In man, the devil always rises up sooner than the angel—the bad resolution sooner than the good one.** His first was not moral, namely, to answer Natalie, and to relate the story of his death—that is, to tell her lies. We find the mourning-robe as beautiful when others put it on for us, as it is warm when we put it on for others.

“But I shall burden her beautiful heart,” said his, “with a new sorrow by thus continuing to wound it by a lie. Ah! not even my real death would be worth so much grief. I will rather keep silence.” But then she would naturally think Henry was angry, and that she had lost this friend likewise; yes, she might even take a journey to the imperial market-town, and, standing before his gravestone, bear it as an additional weight upon her oppressed and trembling soul.

Both ways were exposed to the danger of her coming to Vaduz, and then he would have to turn the

* In ranunculuses the lowest part of the stalk sinks every year deeper into the earth to replace the root, which rots away.

** In enthusiasm the order is reversed. If you desire to know your firmly established principles of moral worth with much greater certainty than you can learn them from resolutions and actions, you have only to pay attention to the joy or sorrow which first arises in you, like a flash of lightning, on the occasion of a moral call of duty, a piece of news, a disappointment, &c., but again immediately disappears, conquered by further reflection. What large pieces of the old corrupting Adam do not we often find!

written lies, which he had spared himself, into spoken lies. One other way yet lay open before him—the most virtuous, but the steepest. He could tell her the truth; but even if Natalie were silent, with what danger was this confession not fraught in his present position? and in Natalie's eyes a crooked yellow light would fall upon his good Henry, especially as she knew nothing which would reveal the magnanimity of his views and deceptions. Nevertheless, his heart suffered least upon the insecure road of truth, and at last he remained firm in this resolve.

CHAPTER XXIV.

News from Kuhschnappel Anticlimax of Girls. Opening of the Seventh Seal.

I AM quite distracted by the thought that though we accept and honour a bill drawn on us by virtue, we yet never pay it without so many renewals and days of grace, while the devil, like Constantinople, will never hear of any.

Firmian made no further objections but those of delay; he only deferred his confession, and thought that as Apollo is the best consoler (*paraclete*) of humanity, and as Natalie had shewn the basilisk of sorrow its own picture in the mirror of poetry, it would naturally be killed by the image. Thus are all virtuous impulses weakened in us by the friction of our inclinations and of time. Another letter again threw all the scenes of his theatre into confusion. It came from the Schulrath Stiefel.

“High noble-born, especially highly to be respected Mr. Inspector,—Your honour will recollect but too well, that according to the last will and testament of our mutual friend, the late Advocate of the Poor, Mr. Siebenkäs, Mr. Heimlicher von Blaise was to pay over his inheritance, and, moreover, as you know, to your worthy self, in order that you might remit the moneys to the widow. In case of refusal, the late testator declared he would appear as a ghost. Be that as it may,

thus much, at least, is the general gossip of the town, that for some weeks past a ghost, in the shape of our late friend, has really pursued the Heimlicher every where, who has become so bedridden in consequence, that he has taken the holy sacrament, and really resolved to deliver up the above-mentioned moneys. I now beg to ask you whether you will first receive them, or whether, as is almost more natural, they shall not be delivered at once to the widow? I have yet to mention, that, according to the will of the testator, I married the latter, the late Madame Siebenkäs, some time ago, and she is now pregnant. She is an excellent wife and housekeeper: we live in harmony and peace. She is no Thalæa,* and she would give her life for her husband as gladly as he would give his for her; and I often wish for nothing so much as that my predecessor, her good never-to-be-forgotten first husband, Siebenkäs, who sometimes had his little whims, could be a spectator of the happiness in which at present his dear Lenette is swimming. She weeps for him every Sunday when she passes across the churchyard; but, at the same time, she confesses that her lot is at present much better. I have had to learn now, for the first time, alas! the wretched condition in which her late husband lived, with respect to his purse. How willingly would I have assisted him and his wife, as becomes a Christian, had I known it! If the deceased, who now possesses more than all of us, can, in his glory, look down upon us, he will certainly forgive me. I humbly

* Thalæa, the wife of Pinarius, under the government of Tarquinius Superbus, was the first who quarrelled with her mother-in-law, Gegania: Plut. in *Numa*. German history will perhaps some day make still more honourable mention of the first wife who did *not* quarrel with her mother-in-law; at least, a German Plutarch should be on the look-out for such a one.

beg for a speedy answer. One cause of the delivery of the inheritance may also be, that Mr. Heimlicher, who, on the whole, is a righteous man, is no longer baited by Mr. von Meyern; they have quite fallen out with one another, as the whole town knows; and the latter has broken off his betrothal with five ladies in Baireuth, and is now about to enter into the bond of holy wedlock with an inhabitant of Kuhschnappel.

"My wife is as angry with him as Christian love permits; and she says, when he meets her, she is like a huntsman when he meets an old woman in his path in the morning; for he was the cause of much needless vexation between her and her husband; and she often relates to me with pleasure how finely you, most esteemed Mr. Inspector, oftentimes unhooded this dangerous man: however, he does not venture to set his foot in my house.

"For the moment, I will defer a yet more detailed request as to whether you will not fill the vacant place of the late gentleman as co-operator to the Gods'-Messenger of German Programmes, which, I may say, is taken with approval in the gymnasia and lycæa of Swabia, as far as Nuremberg, Baireuth, and Hof. There is rather a superfluity than a want of wretched programme-botchers; and you, therefore—pray believe me, it is no flattery—are just the right sort of man; one who would know how to swing the satirical scourge over such frog-spawn in the Castalian springs as verily few others could do. My wife also adds her most heartfelt greetings to the highly-esteemed friend of her late husband; and I remain, in the hope of a speedy answer, your honour's most devoted,

S. R. STIEFEL, *Schulrath.*"

By great sorrows the human heart is protected against small ones—by the waterfall against the rain. Firmian could now only remember, and suffer, and exclaim to himself, “Then I have lost you quite—for ever! Oh! you were always good; it was I only who was not so. Be happier than your lonely friend, whom you justly mourn every Sunday.”

He now attributed the whole fault of his former matrimonial lawsuits to his satirical humour, and ascribed the failure of joys to his own cloudy weather. But he was now more unjust to himself than he was formerly to Lenette.

I will instantly make a present to the world of my thoughts upon the matter.

To girls love is the sun’s propinquity—yes, it is the transit of every such Venus through the sun of the ideal world. In this period of the higher style of their souls they love all that we love—even science—and the whole better world within the bosom; and they despise what we despise—even clothes and news. In this spring, these nightingales sing up to the time of the summer-solstice. The wedding-day is their longest day. Then the devil fetches away, not every thing indeed, but every day a little bit. The bass-bond of marriage ties the poetical wings; and the marriage-bed is for the imagination an Engelsburg and a prison with bread and water allowance. I have often followed the poor bird of paradise, or peacock of Psyche, in the honey-moon, and in this moulting-season picked up the glorious feathers of the wings and tail, which the bird scattered abroad; and afterwards, when the husband thinks he has married a naked crow, I shew him the bunch of feathers. How explain this? Thus: Marriage

overspreads the poetical world with the rind of the real world; as, according to Descartes, our earthly sphere is a sun overlaid with a dirty bark. The hands of labour are awkward, hard, and full of callosities, and find it difficult to continue to hold or draw the fine thread of the ideal woof; therefore, among the higher ranks, where women in lieu of work-rooms have only work-baskets, where they turn the little spinning-wheels on their laps with the finger, and where love still endures in marriage—frequently even towards the husband himself—the marriage-ring is not so often as among the lower orders a Gyges-ring, which renders books, and all the arts of music, poetry, painting, and dancing, invisible. Upon heights, plants and flowers of all kinds, especially female plants, become stronger and more spicy. A woman is not able, like a man, to protect her inner castles of air and of magic on the outer side exposed to the weather. To what, then, is the wife to cling? To her husband. The husband must always stand near the liquid silver of the female spirit with a spoon, and continually skim off the scum which covers it, that the silver glance of the ideal may continue to glitter.

But there are two species of husbands—Arcadians, or lyric poets of life, who love for ever, like Rousseau, even with grey hairs. Such are not to be controlled or comforted when, in the female “flower-wreath,” bound with gilt-edges, on turning over the little work, leaf by leaf, they no longer see any of the gold, as is the case with all gilt-edged books.

Secondly, there are shepherd-swains and pastors of scabby sheep—I mean master-minstrels, or men of business, who thank God when the enchantress, like

other sorceresses, is at length transformed into a grumbling house-cat, which destroys the vermin.

No one has more *ennui* and fear (and therefore some day I will direct the compassion of my readers to the circumstance in a comic biography) than a fat, pompous, weighty bass-singer of a man of business, who, like the Roman elephants in former times, is forced to dance on the slack-rope of love, and whose loving gestures and play of features I find most perfectly imaged in the marmot, who, when first awakened from his winter's sleep by the warmth of the room, finds it so difficult to get into the way of moving. With widows alone, who are less desirous of being loved than of being married, a heavy man of business can begin his romance at the point where all romance-writers terminate theirs, namely, upon the step of the marriage-altar. Such a man, built in the simplest style, would have a load taken from his heart if any one would love his shepherdess for him, in his name, so long until he had nothing else to do in the affair but to celebrate the wedding; and no one would have more pleasure in relieving them of this burden or cross than myself. I wanted to advertise myself in the public papers (but was afraid it might be taken for a joke), and announce that I was willing to swear platonic eternal love to all endurable girls whom a man of business has not even the time to love—to make them the necessary declarations of love as plenipotentiary of the husband; and, in short, to lead them, as *substitutus sine spe succedendi*, or as company-cavalier, on my arm, through the whole uneven land of love, until, on the borders, I should be able to deliver over my charge, ready prepared, to the *sponsus* (bridegroom). This

would then be a love-making, rather than a marriage, by ambassadors. If, in accordance with such a *systema assistentiæ*, any one would wish to employ the writer of this article as feoffee and principal commissary even in the honeymoon itself, as some love also occurs at this period, he must be man of sense enough to make the condition beforehand, that

In Siebenkäs' Lenette, without his being to blame, the ideal isle of the blessed had immediately sunk down miles deep before the marriage-altar. The husband could not help it; but neither could he prevent it. In short, dear Mr. Education Councillor Campe, you should not strike with your ferula so loud upon your writing-desk, whenever a solitary female frog croaks forth something, in the nearest pond, which may be put into an annual. Ah! do not tear away from the good creatures who embroider the most lovely dreams, full of fancy-blossoms, on the empty web of life, the short ones of a sentimental love! They will, as it is, too soon be awakened, too soon; and neither I nor you, with all our writings, can put them again to sleep.

Siebenkäs answered the Schulrath the same day, in a few short and hasty lines. "He was very glad," he wrote, "that he had kept to the letter of the testament and of the laws; and he herewith enclosed him a power of attorney to receive the money. He merely begged him, as a great scholar, who often understood such matters less than he thought he did, to let the business be transacted by a lawyer, since, without jurists, the *jus* is of no avail—often, indeed, of very little even with them. He had no time to review programmes—

not even to read them; and he begged to present his respects to his wife."

It is not unpleasant to me that all my readers have of themselves discovered that the ghost, or supernatural Wauwau, or Mumbo-Jumbo, who had drawn the inheritance-booty out of the claws of the Heimlicher von Blaise better than the troops of the judicial courts, was no other than Henry Leibgeber, who availed himself of his resemblance to the late Siebenkäs to play the *revenant*. I need not, therefore, tell the reader what he is already acquainted with.

When a man has crawled up a steep Alp with the hands of a tree-frog, the first prospect he obtains from the summit is frequently into a yawning precipice. Firmian beheld an abyss below him. He was obliged to abandon his former resolution—I mean, he dare not now say a word to his Natalie of his resurrection from the charnel-house, not a syllable of his continuance after death.

Alas, the happiness of his Lenette, who had two husbands—though quite innocently—would then be placed upon the tip of a tongue. His would be the fault—Lenette's the misery.

"No, no," said he. "Time, by degrees, will deposit dust upon my image in Natalie's good heart, and draw out the colours."

In short, he was silent: the proud Natalie was also silent. In this terrible situation, close to the hard eternal knot of the play, he passed his hours on the theatre, full of anxiety. Over every charm of spring the raven-flight of cares threw its juggling shadow, and poisonous dreams obtruded on his slumber like a mildew. Every night of dreams cut asunder the falling

planet-knot, and with it his heart. How would Fate save him from this reek, this suffocating gas of anxiety? How would it heal the finger-worm in his wedding-ring finger? By taking off his arm.

One long evening the Count, before going to bed, was as cordial and open to him as it is possible for men of the world to be. He said he had something very pleasant to communicate to him, but must first be allowed to make a remark. It had struck him, he continued, that the Advocate was much less cheerful and humorous, since he had entered upon his office, than he was wont to be in former days. On the contrary, if he might be permitted to say it openly, he was often downcast, and too sentimental; and yet he himself had formerly asserted (but this was the other Leibgeber) that he would rather hear a man curse at a misfortune than lament over it; and that a person might have his feet sticking in the winter-snow, and yet have his nose in the spring, and even in the snow smell a flower. "I forgive it readily; for I think I guess the cause," added he.

But his pardoning was not quite true; for in this he was like the great generally, inasmuch as all strong feeling, even love—but most especially sorrow—was tiresome to him; and a hearty hand-squeeze of friendship was almost as bad as a tread on the toes. He desired that sorrow should pass by him smiling, and wickedness laughing, or, at most, laughed at; as, in fact, the coldest men of the world resemble the physical man, in whom the greatest warmth is about the region of the diaphragm.* Consequently the former Leibgeber—this tempestuously windy, and, at the same time,

* Walter's Physiology.

serene blue sky—would naturally be more agreeable to the Count than the pretended one.

But how differently did not this reproach, which we read so quietly, affect our Siebenkäs! He held himself to blame for this sun-eclipse of his Leibgeber, caused by sun-spots not his own, but which, owing to his position, proceeded apparently from himself; and he looked upon them as such heavy sins against his dear friend, that he felt it an absolute necessity to do penance and confess.

The Count now continued: "Your sensitiveness cannot only have reference to the loss of your friend Siebenkäs; for since his death you have not spoken of him as warmly to me as you did before, during his lifetime. Pardon me this frankness."

Thereupon a fresh pang at the darkening of his Leibgeber clouded his brow; and he could scarcely control himself sufficiently to hear his patron to an end.

"But with me, best Leibgeber, this is no reproach; on the contrary, an excellence. One should not grieve for ever for the dead. If we are to grieve at all, it should be for the living. And you may leave off doing the latter next week; for then my daughter is coming; and" (this he spoke with peculiar emphasis) "she brings her friend Natalie along with her—they met on the road."

Siebenkäs jumped up hastily, stood firm and speechless, held his hand before his eyes, not as a screen to his feelings, but as a protection from the light, in order to overlook and pursue the piled-up cloud-masses of thoughts which rushed against one another, before he made his answer.

But the Count, who, thinking he was Leibgeber, misconstrued him in all things, and ascribed his sensitive metamorphosis to his hopeless love for Natalie, begged him, before he spoke, to hear him to an end, and accept his assurance of the pleasure it would give him to do all in his power to retain the lovely friend of his daughter in his neighbourhood. Heavens! what a confusion thrice confounded the Count made of what was so simple?

Siebenkäs, blown upon tempestuously from new quarters of the compass, was obliged to beg one minute's time for deliberation; for the peace of three souls was now at stake. But he had scarcely made a few hasty paces through the room, when he again stood firm, and said to himself: "Yes, I shall do right!" Then he begged the Count to give him his word of honour to preserve inviolate a secret he was about to confide to him, which neither regarded or injured himself or his daughter in the least.

"In that case, why not?" answered the Count; for whom the revelation of a secret was as the clearing away of a forest before a fine expansive prospect.

Then Firmian opened his heart, his life, and every thing. It was a stream let loose, which rushes into a new channel, and is not yet to be measured with the eye. Many times the Count detained him by a new misunderstanding; for he had only invented the love of Natalie to the real Leibgeber as seeming to him probable, and had not heard a word from any one about the true love she bore to Firmian.

It was now the turn of the astonished Count to surprise the Advocate. Among the many expressions which, under such circumstances, his face might have

worn—offended, angry, shocked, embarrassed, enraptured, cold—the only expression was one of the greatest contentment.

He was particularly pleased, he said, that he had noticed and taken umbrage at so many little things; and that in some respects he had not thought too well of Leibgeber, in others with too blind a partiality; but most of all, he was charmed with the good fortune of having in this manner a double Leibgeber, and of knowing that the traveller was not grieving for a dead friend.

Let no one who has seen a bright order-star sparkling upon an old, extinguished breast, be surprised at the tranquillity of the Count. When our old man of the world looked upon the shuttle of this friendly chain flying to and fro, the love and sacrifice on both sides, and held the bright Raphael's tapestry of friendship that had been woven by them in his hands, and looked upon it, he received, for the first time in so many years, a new enjoyment; for he found that he had hitherto been sitting in his front box before a living comic historic drama, of which he himself finely developed the plot, and which at any moment could be enacted over again in his head.

His Inspector also became for him a new being, full of fresh entertainment, by his having gone off the stage, changed his dress, and stepped again into the room in the character of the pseudo-late Siebenkäs, who in future could not narrate to him too much of the narrator himself.

He who has enjoyed the bliss of remaining truthful can understand the pleasure it gave Siebenkäs to be enabled once more to express himself without restraint

upon all that concerned himself, Henry, and Natalie, inasmuch as he now, for the first time, felt the full weight of the burden he had cast off—of working out the jesting deception of a minute into the drama of a year, containing three hundred and sixty-five acts. How easy it was for him now to make known to the Count that, before the arrival of Natalie, whom he would neither continue to deceive, nor yet could undeceive, he would depart, and betake himself straightway to the imperial market-town Kuhschnappel!

As the Count listened to him with surprise, Firmian told him all the motives that urged him to go: a longing desire to visit his tombstone and unhallowed grave, in order, as it were, to make expiation—a longing to see Lenette from afar, himself unseen, perhaps even to see her child quite near—a longing to hear the true account of the happiness of her married life from eye-witnesses; for Stiefel's letter had wafted the flower-ashes of former days into his eyes, and opened the leaves of the sleeping flower of his conjugal love—a longing to wander about the theatre of his former oppressed condition erect, now that his burden was cast off—a longing to hear in the market-town some news of his Leibgeber, who had lately been there—a longing to celebrate the month of his death, August, in solitude. He had been treated like the vine, from which in August the leaves are plucked off, that the sun may shine more warmly upon the grapes.

In a word—for why adduce many reasons, since, when all that is required is a will, there cannot afterwards be a lack of reasons?—he departed.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Journey. The Churchyard. The Ghost. The End of the Misery, and of the Book.

I PERCEIVE every day more clearly that I and the other 999,999,990* men are nothing but little things filled with contradictions, with incurable nullities, and with resolutions every one of which has its opposing muscle (*musc. antagonista*). We do not contradict others half so often as ourselves: this last chapter is a new proof of it. The reader and I have hitherto only laboured to conclude the book; and now that we are about to do so, it is much against the will of both of us. I shall at least do something, if, to the best of my ability, I in some sort conceal its end, like the end of a garden, which is also full of flower-pieces, and say one or two things which, at any rate, will lengthen the work a little.

The Inspector hastened, with the fortress of a muscular, full breast, into the open air, among the ears of corn. The nightmare of silence and deceit no longer weighed upon him so heavily: the avalanche of his life had melted away, at least to a third of its size, beneath the sun of his present good fortune. His having become electrically plated with a rich income, and even the increased number of his occupations, had

* One thousand millions crawl upon this sphere.

charged him with fire and courage. His appointment was a mountain, traversed by so many veins of gold and silver, that he was already enabled in this first year to send anonymous subscriptions to the Prussian Widow's Provident Fund Institution, in order first to halve his fraud, and finally make amends for it, by annulling it altogether.

I would not bring this act of duty before the eyes of the public at all, had I not to fear that Kritter, in Göttingen, who refers the closing of this fund to the year 1804, or even more moderate calculators, who place its last unction in the year 1825, might take advantage of my Flower-pieces to lay the death-dance of the Widow's Fund to the charge of the Inspector. I should then extremely regret having mentioned the matter at all in my Flower-pieces.

He did not take his way through Hof or Baireuth, and the romantic roads of his former journeys, fearing lest the hand of Fate, which sows behind the clouds, should conduct his apparition-body towards Natalie; and yet he cherished a slight hope that the same hand would lead him so that he might chance to meet his Leibgeber, as the latter had been cruising lately in the waters of Kuhschnappel. As it was, he had put on again, while on the road, the shirt, jacket, and whole exterior body which he had received from him in exchange in the inn at Gefrees; and the dress was a mirror, which continually shewed him his absent friend. A Saufinder, like Leibgeber's, which lifted up his head in a forester's house to look at him as he passed, sent a thrill of joy through his heart; but the dog's nose knew him as little as its master.

However, the nearer he approached the mountains and woods, behind whose Chinese church-yard wall lay his two empty houses—his grave and his room—the closer did anxiety draw its drag-net about his heart. It was not the fear of being known (owing to his present resemblance to Leibgeber this was impossible); indeed he would have been taken for his own ghost and prophet Samuel sooner than for the still living Siebenkäs; but, besides love and expectation, there was another cause of his anxiety, by which I myself was once oppressed while travelling among the Herculanean antiquities of my childhood. The iron bands and rings which had cramped my bosom in childhood, when, helpless and inconsolable, the little man trembles before the sorrows and pains of life and death, tightened round it once more. We then stand midway between the footstool we have cast away, the hand-cuffs and foot-chains which we have burst asunder, and the lofty, rustling liberty-tree of philosophy which conducts us into the free open battle-arena and into the coronation-city of earth.

On every bush, near which he had formerly strolled during his poor, empty, vintage-autumn, Firmian beheld the cast-off skin of the snakes hanging, which had formerly coiled about his feet.

Remembrance, this after-winter of the hard, cruel days, fell in the happier season of his life, and these dissimilar feelings—the pressure of his former fetters and his present atmosphere of liberty—generated a third sentiment, which was bitter, sweet, and anxious, at the same time.

In the twilight he went slowly and attentively

through the streets of the town, strewn with scattered ears of corn. Every child that passed him with the evening beer, every dog he recognised, and every familiar sound of the clock-bells were full of fossil-impressions of joy-flowers and passion-flowers, whose originals had long ago crumbled to decay. As he passed by his former abode he heard the creaking and rattling of two stocking-looms. He took up his quarters in the hotel of the Lizard, which cannot have been the grandest hotel of the market-town, since the Advocate got his beef there upon a pewter plate, which, according to the cuts and marks received from a fac-simile of his own knife, had inscribed itself a member of his pawned plate-committee; however, the hotel possessed this advantage, that Firmian could occupy the little rooms on the third story, whence he was enabled to establish an observatory, or mast-head of observation, upon the study of Stiefel, which was situated lower, on the opposite side of the way. But his Lenette did not come to the window. Oh! if he had seen her, he would have knelt down in the room for very yearning and sadness! However, when it became very dark, he only saw his old friend Pelzstiefel hold a printed paper out of the window against the light of the sunset sky—probably a proof-sheet of the Advertiser of German Programmes.

He was surprised that the Schulrath seemed so worn and thin, and wore a crape round his arm. "Perhaps the poor child of my Lenette is already dead!" thought he.

Late at night he crept out to the garden whence

not every one returns, and alongside of which lies the hanging Eden-garden of the next life.

In the churchyard he was secured against the approach of spectators by the ghost-stories by which Leibgeber had forced his inheritance out of the hands of his guardian. As he could not approach his empty subterranean bed at once, he first passed by the grave of the woman who had died in child-bed, upon the then dark but now grassy hillock of which he had planted the wreath of flowers, that was to have given an unexpected pleasure to his Lenette's heart, but gave her, on the contrary, an unexpected sorrow. At last he came to the bed-curtains of the grave-siesta—to his grave-stone, the inscription of which he read with a cold shudder.

"Suppose this stone trap-door lay upon your face, and covered the whole dome of heaven?" said he to himself; and he thought of the clouds, the cold, and the night, that reigned around the poles of life—the birth and death of man—as round the poles of the earth. He now looked upon his mockery of the last hour as a sin. The moon was overcast by the mourning streamer of a long dark cloud. His heart was oppressed and softened, when suddenly something bright, that glittered near his grave, attracted his attention, and caused a revulsion in his whole soul.

There he beheld a fresh lately-covered grave in a wooden painted frame, somewhat like a bedstead. Upon these coloured boards Firmian read, as long as his streaming eyes would permit him, the following inscription:—

"Here reposes in God
WENDELIN LENETTE STIEFEL,
Born Egelkraut of Augsburg.

Her first husband was the late Advocate of the Poor,
Firmian Stanislaus Siebenkäs :

She entered into the holy bond of wedlock, for the second time,
with the Schulrath Stiefel of this place, Oct. 20, 1786 ;

And, after passing three-quarters of a year with him in a peaceful union,

She died in child-bed, July 22, 1787,

And lies here with her little still-born daughter,
waiting for a happy resurrection "

"O thou poor one! thou poor one!" He could think no more. Just when her day of life was brighter and warmer, the earth swallows her up, and she carries nothing to the grave but a hand roughened by labour, a face furrowed by the bed of sickness, and a contented but empty heart, which, pressed down into the hollow ways and mine-shafts of earth, had seen so few flowery meadows, so few stars. Her sufferings had always enveloped her so closely, darkly, and gigantically, that no picturing imagination could soften and beautify them by the shifting colours of poesy,—as no rainbow is possible when it rains over the whole sky.

"Why have I so often pained you—even by my death,—and shewn so little indulgence to your innocent humours?" said he, weeping bitterly.

He threw a worm that crept and curled out of the grave, far away, as though it had just come, after having satiated itself, from the beloved cold heart. Whereas it is satiated by what at last satiates us—earth. He thought of the mouldering child, which laid its withered thin arms around his soul, as if it were his own, and to whom Death had given as much as a god gave to Endymion,—sleep, eternal youth, and immortality. At

last he tottered away from the place of mourning, his heart not lightened, but fatigued by the tears he had shed.

When he entered the hotel, he found a woman in the public room singing to the harp. accompanied by a little flute-player. The burden of her song was: "Dead is dead, gone is gone!" It was the same musician who had performed on the harp and sung on New Year's-eve, when his Lenette, *now* laid low and appeased, had buried her grief-worn face in her handkerchief, weeping, and forsaken.

Oh! the fiery arrows of the tones pierced hissing through his wounded heart. The poor fellow had no shield.

"How terribly, incessantly, I then tortured her!" said he; "how much she sighed! how silent she was! Oh! if thou couldst but look down upon me from above, now that thou art certainly happier! Couldst thou but see into my bleeding soul, not to forgive me, no, but only that I might have the consolation of suffering for thy sake! Oh, how differently would I behave towards thee now!"

Such is the language we all use when we have *buried* those whom we have tortured; but on the same evening of affliction we cast the javelin deep into another bosom that is still warm. Alas, for us weak ones with strong resolutions! If the cold senseless form, whose festering wounds, inflicted by ourselves, we expiate with penitent tears and resolutions to do better, were this day again to appear amongst us, new-created and blooming in youth, and remain with us,—alas! only in the first week should we press the newly found, dearer soul forgivingly to our bosoms; and after-

wards, as before, we should pierce it with the old sharp instruments of torture. That we should thus act towards our beloved dead, I deduce from the fact, not merely of our hardness towards the living, but of our acting over again in our dreams, when the lost forms revisit us, all that we now repent. Far from me be the wish to deprive a mourner of the consolation of repentance, or of the feeling that he loves the lost being more deeply and better,—I would only weaken the pride that may be built upon this repentance and this feeling.

Later in the evening, when Firmian beheld the sunk and grief-worn countenance of his old friend, whose heart possessed so little more on earth, looking towards heaven, as if seeking there, among the stars, the friend of whom he had been deprived,—sorrow pressed the last tear from his wrung heart, and in the madness of grief he even accused himself of being the cause of his friend's sufferings, forgetting that before the latter could forgive, he would have to thank him. He awoke, fatigued by the sorrow he had endured, that is, with that bleeding away of the feelings which at last melts into a sweet fainting and longing for death.

He had lost every thing, even that which was not buried. He dared not visit the Schulrath, for fear of betraying himself, and thus endangering the peace of the innocent man, by staking it upon a dubious chance; for Stiefel would never have been able to reconcile his orthodox conscience, nor yet his feelings of honour, to his marriage with a woman who was already a wedded wife.

But he could visit the hairdresser, Merbitzer, with

less danger of betraying himself, and carry away from him a richer treasury of news. Besides, together with the bands of love, the scythe of death had cut asunder all his chains and knots: he could now injure no one but himself by taking off his death's mask and shewing himself uncorrupted to others, even to his sorrowing Natalie; and he was the more impelled to do so, as, on every lovely evening, and after every good deed, his conscience demanded of him the interest in arrears of the still unpaid debt of Truth, and refused to grant any further respite. His soul also swore, like a god to his soul, that he would only linger this one day, and never return again.

By his lameness, the hairdresser immediately knew that it could be no other than the Inspector of Vaduz, Leibgeber. Like posterity, he heaped the thickest rosemary crowns upon his former lodger, Siebenkäs, and declared that the present tenants of his room, good-for-nothing stocking-weavers, were not to be compared with the late gentleman; adding, that the whole house cracked when they stamped and creaked above stairs. He then informed him that the late gentleman had fetched away his wife within the year; that the latter could never forget Merbitzer's house; that she often came at night in her mourning dress, in which also she desired to be buried, and conversed with them about her change of life. "They lived together," said the hairdresser, "like two children," *i. e.* she and Stiefel.

The conversation, the house, and lastly his own apartment, now so noisy, revealed nothing but the deserted places of his destroyed Jerusalem. Where his writing-table had stood, there was now a stocking-

loom, &c.; and all his inquiries concerning the past were like the relics of a conflagration collected together in order to rebuild the burnt-down pleasure-houses from their phoenix-ashes. Hope is the morning red of joy, and memory its evening red; but the latter is so apt to drop down as faded grey dew, or rain, and the blue day, promised by the red, breaks indeed, but in another earth, with another sun. Merbitzer unconsciously cut deep and wide the split in Firmian's heart, into which he grafted the sundered blossom-twigs of by-gone days; and when, in conclusion, his wife related that, after receiving the last sacrament of the sick, Lenette had inquired of the evening-preacher, "Shall I not join my Firmian after my death?" Firmian turned away his breast from these unwitting dagger-thrusts, and hastened away, but into the country, that he might not meet any one whom he would have to deceive.

And yet he longed for a human being, even though he could not find one anywhere but beneath his lowest roof in the churchyard. The murky and sultry atmosphere of the evening called into being all sorts of melancholy wishes. The heavens were overspread with scattered unripe fragments of a thunder-cloud, and in the eastern horizon a muttering storm already flung its blazing pitch-torches and full clouds upon unknown regions. He went home; but as he passed the high railings of Blaise's garden, he thought he perceived a figure dressed in black, resembling Natalie, slip into the arbour. He now, for the first time, paid attention to the information previously received from Merbitzer, that a few days ago a noble lady, in mourning, had made him shew her all the rooms in his house, and

had lingered particularly in that of Siebenkäs, making at the same time all sorts of inquiries. It was not at all improbable, indeed it was quite consistent with Natalie's bold and romantic manner of thinking, that she should have come out of her way on her road to Vaduz, especially as she had never seen Firmian's dwelling-place, and the Inspector had returned her no answer. Rosa, too, was married; and Blaise had become reconciled to her since the visit of the apparition; and what could be more natural than that the anniversary of Firmian's death should stimulate her to undertake a pilgrimage to his last place of refuge?

The mind of her friend consequently dwelt on the thought of her during the whole evening with feelings of painful fond recollection, for she was the one only unshrouded star that still beamed on him from the overcast sky of his former days. It now grew dusk, and there was a cool breeze. The thunder-storms had already spent their force in other lands; lurid, broken clouds alone remained, as if glowing half-consumed firebrands piled one upon the other in the sky. He now went, for the last time, to the spot where death had planted the red carnation, cut off together with its bud; but, as in outward nature, the heaviness of his soul was lightened, and the atmosphere was fresher; tears had diluted the first bitterness of his sorrow. He could now feel with softened grief that this earth is not the building-ground of humanity, only the spot where it is fitted and fashioned.

In the east a long blue streak, with rising stars, gleamed above the fallen thunder-clouds. The moon, the light-magnet of the sky, reposed like a fountain of

beams upon the foil of a split cloud, and the wide-spread veil melted away, and moved not.

When Firmian, on nearing the beloved grave, raised his drooping head, he perceived a black figure resting on it. He stopped short—gazed more piercingly; it was the form of a woman, who looked fixedly at him, with a face cast and frozen in the ice of death. On approaching still more closely, he beheld his beloved Natalie, quite overcome and unconscious, leaning against the painted railings of the grave; her lips and cheeks were overspread with an ashy hue from the autumn-breath of death—her open eyes saw nothing; but the tear-drops that still hung from them shewed that she had lately been alive, and that she had taken him for the apparition of which she had heard so much. In the excess of her sorrow above his tomb, she had longed, in the strength and loneliness of her heart, for the vision to appear; and when she saw him come, she believed that Fate had granted her desire, and then the iron hand of freezing horror grasped her, and squeezed the red rose to a white one. Oh, it was her friend who was most unhappy; his tender, unsheltered heart was crushed between two worlds, which rushed together. With a wailing, pitiful voice, he cried out, "Natalie! Natalie!"

Her lips opened convulsively, and a breath of life gave warmth to the eye; but when she saw the dead man still standing before her, she closed her eyes again, and exclaimed, shuddering, "O God!"

In vain did the sound of his voice call her back to life. No sooner did she look up than her heart froze again at sight of the terrifying apparition near her, and she could do nothing but sigh, "O God!"

Firmian seized her hand, and cried out, "Angel of heaven, I am not dead—I did not die—only look at me! Natalie, dost thou no longer know me? O merciful God! punish me not so terribly; deprive her not of life through me!"

At length she slowly opened her languid eyelids, and saw her old friend trembling at her side, weeping with terror, and his changing countenance distorted by the poisonous stings of agony. He wept more, but, nevertheless, felt a gleam of joy as she still kept her eyes open, and smiling upon her with a painful expression of sympathy, he said, "Natalie, I am still upon the earth, and suffer as much as you do. See you not how I tremble on your account? Touch my warm human hand! Are you still afraid?"

"No," she said, languidly; but continued to look shyly at him as upon a supernatural being, and had not courage to ask an explanation of the riddle. He assisted her, with gently flowing tears, to rise, and said, "Oh, quit this place of sorrow, innocent one! too many tears have fallen upon it. My heart has now no further secret to keep from yours. Ah, now I can and will tell you all!"

He led her out over the silent dead, through the back gate of the churchyard; but she still hung heavily and languidly on his arm as she ascended the nearest hill, and continually shuddered; only the tears which joy, relief from terror, grief, and lassitude, conjointly pressed from her eyes, fell like warm balsam upon her chilled and sorely wounded heart.

Upon the height so painfully gained, the sufferer seated herself, and the black forests of the night, railed in by white harvests, and crossed by the moon's silent

sea of light, lay spread before them. Nature had touched the subdued pedal of midnight, and near Natalie there stood a beloved one, risen from the grave. He now related to her Leibgeber's entreaties, the short history of his mock-death, his residence with the count, all the desires and sorrows of his long solitude, the firm resolve he had taken rather to fly from her than to deceive and wound her beautiful heart, either by word of mouth or by writing, and the revelation he had already made to the father of her friend. The narration of his last moments, and of his final separation from Lenette, made her sob as though it had all been real. Many thoughts thronged upon her mind, but she merely said, "Ah, you only sacrificed yourself for the happiness of others, not for your own; but now you will lay aside and make amends for all your deceptions."

"All, as far as I can," said he; "my bosom and my conscience will again become free. Have not I even kept the oath I made to you, not to see you until after my death?"

She gave him a gentle smile.

They both sunk into a dreamy silence. All at once, as she placed a mourning-cloak * butterfly, which was paralysed by the cold dew, upon her lap, he was struck by her own mourning attire, and inquired, somewhat hastily, "But you, I hope, are not in mourning for any body?"

Alas! she had assumed it on his account.

Natalie answered, "Not now;" and looking at the butterfly compassionately, added, "A few drops and a little cold paralyse the poor thing."

* A day-butterfly, having black wings with white borders.

Her friend thought how easily destiny might have punished his boldness by paralysing the more beautiful, but equally mourning-clad being at his side, who, indeed, had already trembled in the night-frosts of life and in the night-dew of cold tears; but love and sorrow prevented him from answering her.

They remained silent, mutually occupied in divining one another's thoughts, and lost half in their hearts, half in the sublime night. The wide ether had absorbed all the clouds—only those of the sky, alas! Luna, with her saintly halo, like a glorified Madonna, inclined herself from the serene blue towards her pale sister on earth. The stream flowed on unseen beneath a low fog, as the stream of time flows beneath the mists of countries and nations. Behind them the night-wind had laid itself to rest on a swelling, rustling bed of corn, inlaid with blue corn-flowers; and before them, in the valley, lay the reaped harvest of the second world, precious stones, as it were, in their coffin-settings, which had become cold and heavy by death.* And, in contrast to the sunflower and mote in the sunbeam, the pious humble man bowed as moonflower towards the moon, and played in its cool ray as a moonbeam mote, and felt that beneath the starry sky nothing was great but our *hopes*.

Natalie leant upon Firmian's hand, to assist herself in rising, and said, "I am now able to go home."

Without getting up, or even addressing her, he held her hand fast, looked upon the dry prickly stalk of the old rose-bud she had given him, and pressed the thorns into his fingers unconsciously, and without feeling them. His laden bosom heaved with deeper,

* Qualities of the genuine jewel.

warmer breathings, glowing tears hung in his eyes, and the moonshine trembled before them like a falling rain of light. A whole world lay upon his soul and upon his tongue, and overwhelmed both.

"Good Firmian," said Natalie, "what do you want?"

He turned his open fixed eyes towards her gentle form, and pointed down upon his grave: "My home there below, which remains too long empty; for the dream of life is dreamed on too hard a bed."

As she wept too much, and her face, suffused with an expression of heavenly mildness, came too near him, he became confused, and continued, with the bitterest and most heartfelt emotion, "Are not all my dear ones gone, and are you not also about to go? Ah, why has torturing Fate placed the waxen image of an angel upon all our bosoms,* and therewith lowered us into the cold grave? Alas! the soft image dissolves, and no angel appears. Yes, indeed, you have appeared to me; but you disappear, and time will crush your image upon my heart, and my heart too; for when I have lost you, I shall be quite alone. But farewell! Once at least I shall die in earnest, and then I will appear to you again, but not as I did to-day, and nowhere but in eternity. Then I will say to you, 'O Natalie, I loved you there below with infinite sorrows; repay me for it here!'"

She was about to answer, but her voice failed her. She raised her large eyes, filled with tears, to the starry heavens, and attempted to rise, but her friend held

* Waxen images of angels were formerly placed in the grave on the breast of the dead.

her, with his hands bleeding from the thorns, and said, "And can you then leave me, Natalie?"

Hereupon she rose with a noble effort, looked up towards the sky, brushed away the tears which overflowed her eyes, and her soaring soul found a tongue. With hands folded in prayer, she said, "Thou all-loving One! I have lost him, and have found him again! Eternity is upon earth! Make him happy through me!" and her head sunk tenderly and languidly upon his, and she said, "We will remain together."

Firmian stammered out, "O God, thou angel! In life and death thou shalt remain with me."

"For ever, Firmian," said Natalie, still more gently; and the sorrows of our friend were over.

THE END.